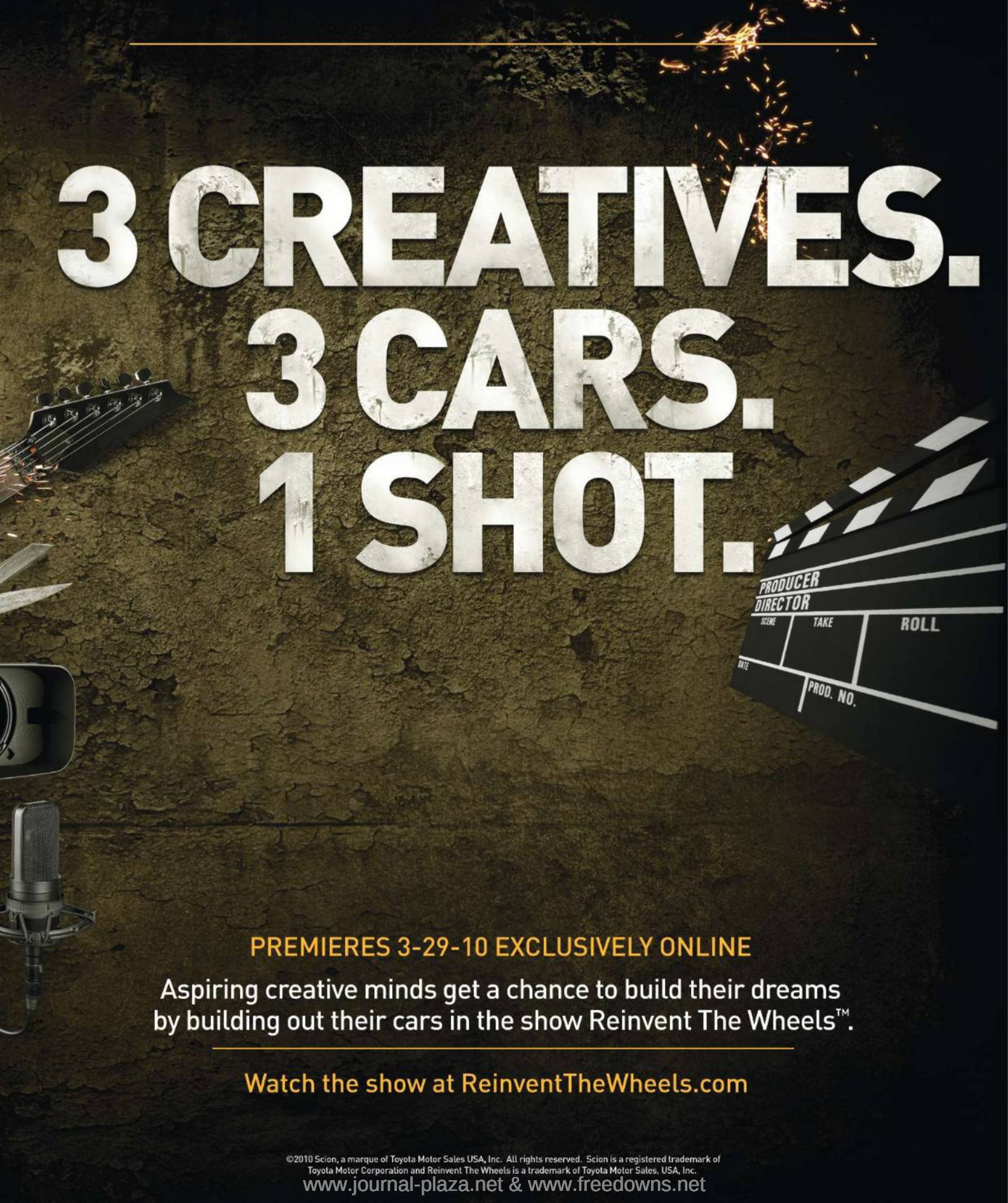

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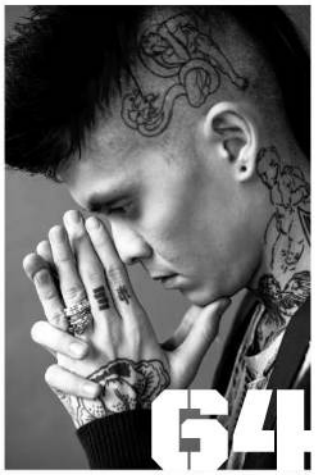
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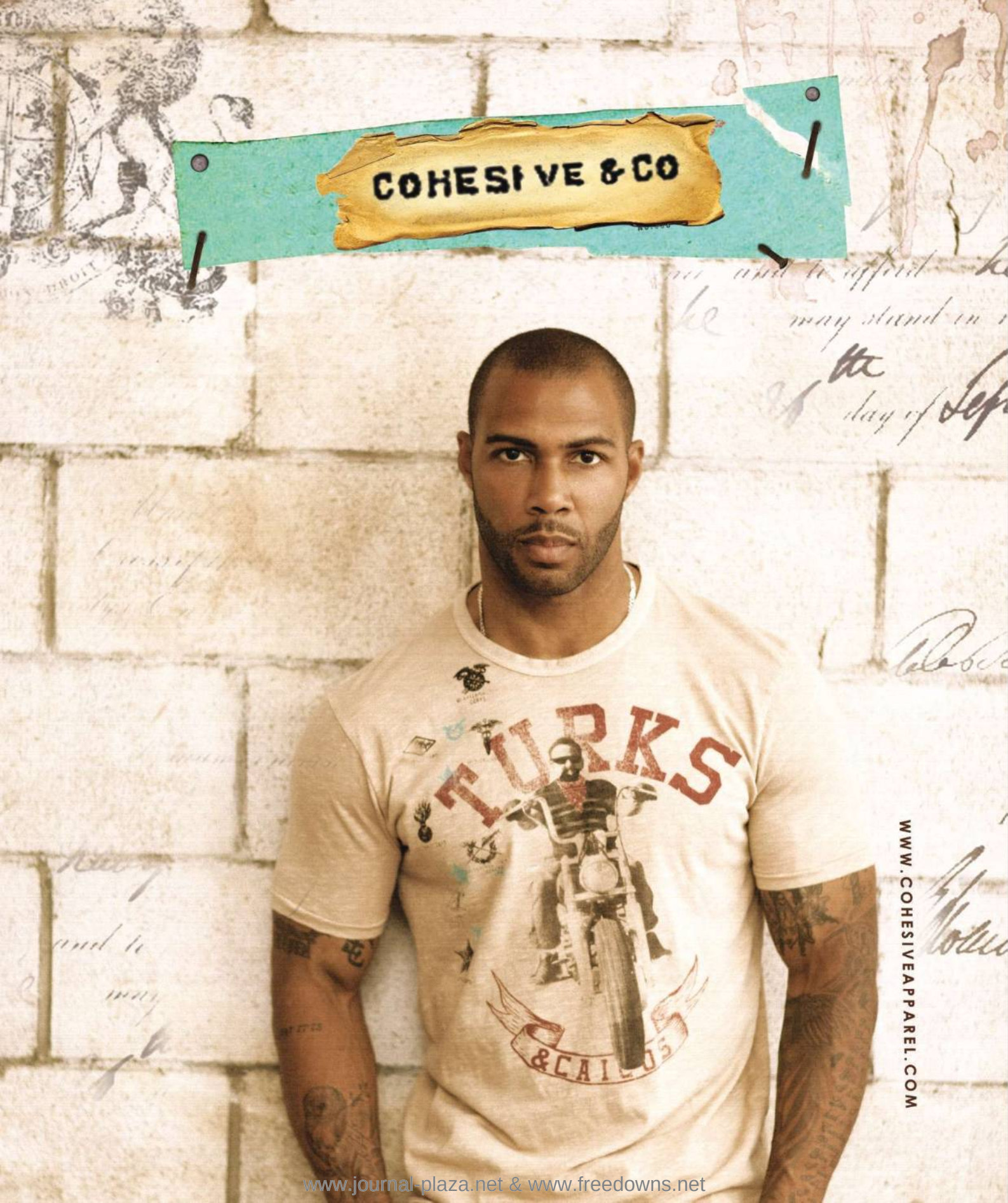








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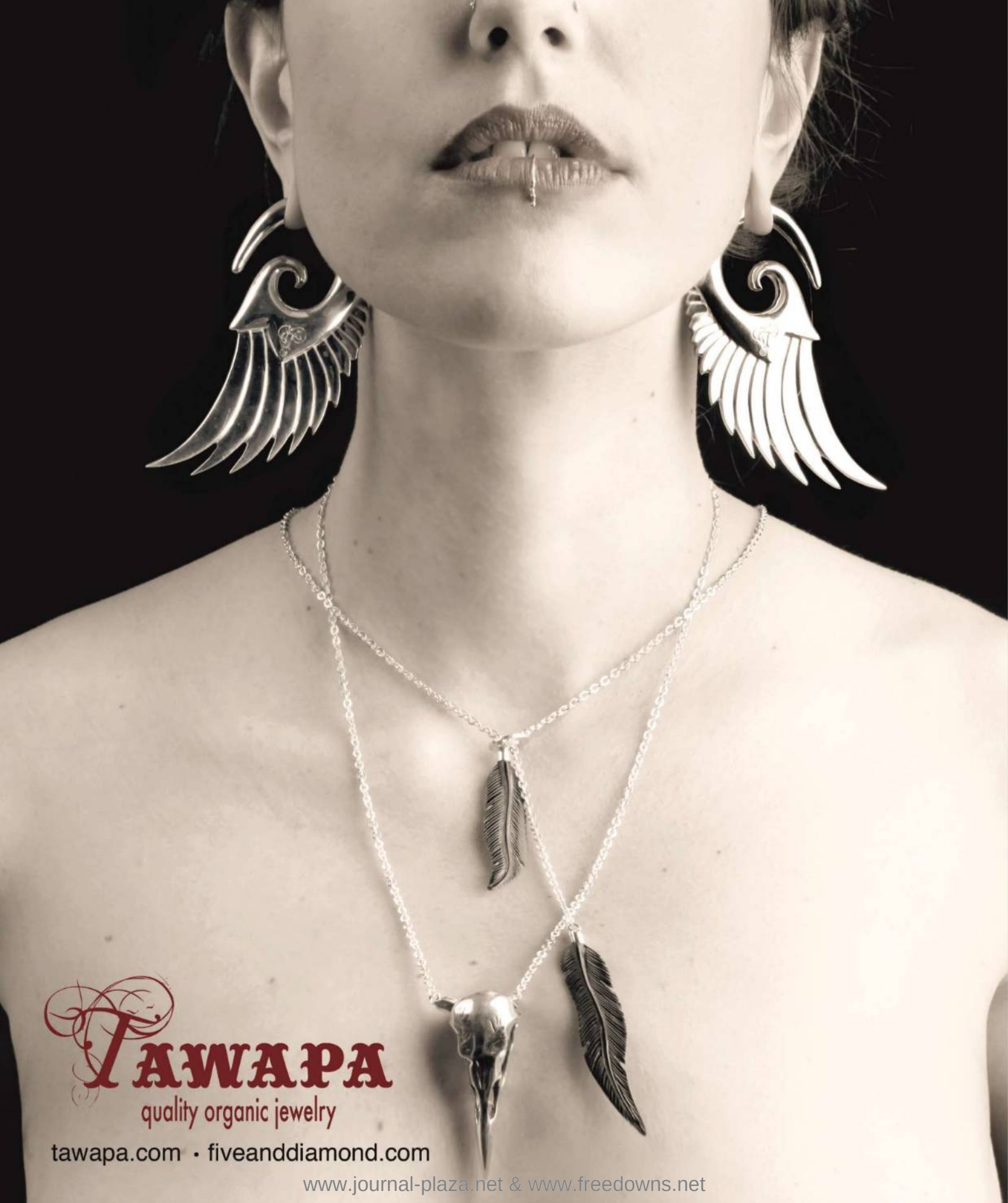
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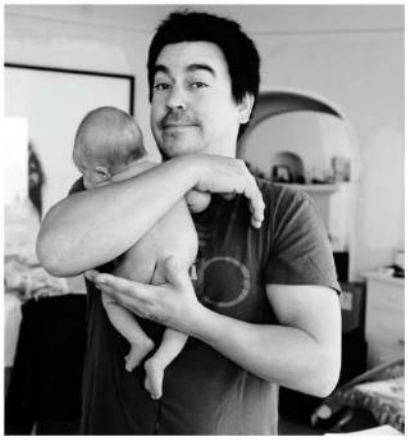


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contributors



We gave photographer **Chris Fortuna** this month's toughest assignment: Hit the beach and photograph four gorgeous tattooed women for our "Inked Girls of Summer" feature (page 42). Lucky stiff! "The shoot was great," he reports. "I have never been on a shoot where all the models just totally rocked any ideas I threw at them." The Los Angeles–based photographer has two tattoos. "The large Japanese-inspired one on my upper arm was my first tattoo. It's water on the outside, fire on the inside of my arm; I dig the idea of opposing forces working together—or not, depending." The second is a large piece on his lower back. "It's two birds flying away from each other with Japanese characters. It basically reads "man's struggle within." Both tattoos were done by Mike Bellamy, who's now at Red Rocket Tattoo in NYC. Fortuna's work appears in *Spin*, *Maxim*, *Interview*, and others.



When photographer **Ari Michelson** shot sultry singer Michelle Branch for this month's issue, a party broke out. "We had a blast at the Chateau Marmont, running around shooting and laughing," he remembers with a grin that makes us wish we were there. Michelson got his start in photography the same way many artists find their chosen craft—for a woman. "I became a photographer to impress a girl. I married the same girl. It's been 10 years. The baby in the photo is ours, and the photo was shot by the same girl," he says. He does not have any tattoos. "I always wanted one but could never keep the same idea for more than a week," he says. Michelson's work appears in *Rolling Stone*, *Revolver*, and other publications. "I've recently shot for *Esquire*, *XXL*, and Julia Epstein's bat mitzvah, which I still owe her photos for … sorry!"

Choose a job you love and you won't work a day in your life, or so goes the famous saying. Photographer **Jimmy Fontaine**, who shot this month's fashion story (page 64), definitely agrees. "Everybody involved in the story were friends and had worked together before, so the day went by without a hitch," the NYC-based photographer explains. "I love the way the images came out. Everything just seemed to flow. It seemed more like hanging with friends than working." Fontaine's work appears in *Elle*, *Nylon*, *Spin*, *Complex*, *Out*, and others. If he weren't a photographer, he'd be working with animals.





"Who doesn't love an Australian accent?" says writer **Kathleen Perricone** about her phone interview with Aussie singer Daniel Merriweather (page 36). The two met up in person a week later. "He is amazing live—flawless voice. He had the audience in the palm of his hand," she says. "When I saw him that night, all I managed to eke out was a dorky, 'You were really great tonight.' Epic fail!" Perricone has four tattoos, including matching bows with star polka dots on her arms—courtesy of Sweety at East Side Ink—and "Bella," the name of her Italian greyhound. "It was done by my ex-boyfriend, who's a tattoo artist, at my kitchen table. I'm classy like that." Perricone contributes to *Star*, *AP* magazine, and others. "If I weren't a writer, I'd be a pop star. Lucky for the world, that didn't happen."

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letter



Back on the streets: INKED editor Jason Buhrmester has been released into the wild.

By the time you read this, I'll be gone. After more than two years as editor of INKED, I am stepping down. The issue you hold in your hands is my last.

During my tenure at INKED, I wanted to do things differently. I wanted this magazine to feel inclusive, whether you just got your first tattoo or were running out of room for ink. I also wanted to explore the good in the world, both in and around tattooing, whether we wrote about the youngest fire chief in the U.S. or a Marine tattooing his fellow soldiers in Iraq. Mostly, I wanted to create a smarter tattoo magazine because *you're* smarter. I was lucky enough to work with people who saw things the same way and wanted to take a chance on what a tattoo magazine could be—and were willing to work their asses off to make it happen. My mantra around the INKED office came from a very wise man: "Tryin' don't get it done." (Actually, that was from John Wayne, and from what I've heard he was a bit of a prick. Still, it's solid advice.)

As for me, I'm leaving to focus on the movie adaptation of my novel, *Black Dogs*. I'll be writing a lot, boozing a little, hitting the Williamsburg skate park while you're still asleep, and getting tattooed. Look for me at your local shop. I'll be the guy in the chair reading INKED.

Best of luck…

Jason Buhrmester
Civilian

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mail



ART STOKE
I just picked up the December/January edition of your magazine and noticed you featured my artwork. That was probably the most amazing thing that ever happened to me! I've been apprenticing for about a year and I always think one day I'll make it into a tattoo mag. That day came sooner than I thought. Thanks!
Daylyn Whiteman
Oshawa, Ontario

GOOD VIBES
I've been looking for tattoo magazines everywhere and I was just out shopping and saw your magazine. I came home and read it, and it is amazing—best magazine I've ever read. I was wondering if you guys could spare a few old issues kicking around the office for me to check out; that would be really cool. Anyways, thanks for having such a great magazine!
Kari
Calgary, Alberta

STARS & STRIPES
I just want to say that you guys have a kick-ass magazine. It is unlike any other tattoo magazine out there! By the way, thank you for supporting the troops. Your February 2010 issue was awesome. I'm definitely a real fan now! Thank you!
SSG Eric Estrada
El Paso, TX

I'm writing this for a few reasons. First, and most important, I love your magazine. Second, in the last one I received, I read that our troops like your mag and wanted back copies. I keep all my old mags and would be honored to send them to the troops, along with pretty much anything else they need.

I am a correctional officer and so are my brother and sister. C.O.s (not guards) do their part in the law enforcement community, and many of them are fighting overseas. We are similar to police officers and fire personnel in that we like to take care of our own and, when it is called for, we extend our help to our brothers and sisters in civil service. Please let us know how we can help.
Scott
Warwick, RI

[Editor's note: We suggest using Operation Shoebox (operationshoebox.com). The site features a mailing address and a list of requested items from soldiers, including everything from magazines to eyedrops.]

RECORD COMPLAINT
My name is Hollis Cantrell, and I'm the current Guinness World Record holder for the most tattoos in 24 hours by a single person. I earned this record on November 16, 2008, in Phoenix, AZ, at Artistic Tattoo, with 801 tattoos.

I was just informed that the February 2010 issue of INKED has an article naming Jeremy Swan as the record holder. While his is a huge accomplishment, Guinness does not yet recognize it as an official claim, likely because they impose strict guidelines per attempt. If Jeremy met the guidelines, it's possible he will be officially recognized in the future. However, no claims can be publicly stated using "Guinness World Record" until that claim is officially recognized and validated. Thank you for your time and consideration.
Hollis Cantrell
Phoenix, AZ



READER OF THE MONTH
NICHELLE PIERCE
Los Gatos, CA

WRITE TO US! Got something to say? Send all letters of praise, notes of complaint, story suggestions, and other comments to letters@inkedmag.com. All submissions should include the writer's name and address. Letters may be edited for clarity, length, and content.

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INKED LIFE

My First Ink

NAME: Caitlyn Callaway

OCCUPATION: Student

HOMETOWN: Atlanta, GA

The stars on my wrist were my first tattoo. I still love it! It was the day of my 18th birthday and I went right after school to Joey Wallace at Karmic Tattoo, outside of Atlanta. When I got home, Dad didn't really say much since he has a few, but Mom saw it and left town for three days. She was angry! It's funny now because she thinks they are all pretty. Next, I'm getting an owl to match one that my dad has on his arm!

photo by GREG MANIS

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COUTURE SHOCK

High fashion's fascination with tattooing continues. First, Rodarte painted their models with Maori tribal tattoos for a recent runway show. Then Jean Paul Gaultier mock-tattooed models with their names. Now Chanel is offering a first in the company's 100-year history: fake tattoos. The French fashion house will launch Les Trompe L'Oeil de Chanel, a set of 55 temporary tattoos ranging from faux garter belts to bracelets, many of which feature the Chanel logo. The set will sell for $78, or about half of what it would cost you for an amazing piece of Sailor Jerry flash and a real tattoo (we're just sayin').







BOOK IT

Tattoo artist Martin LaCasse got the idea for his new book, *Three Sixty Five* ($60, prestoart.com), after growing frustrated in his search for tattoo reference materials. His solution: Draw one sketch a day for an entire year and then compile the material into the ultimate tattoo reference guide. The final collection is broken into four volumes and housed in a gorgeous slipcase. The sketches, complete with LaCasse's notes, are broken down by month and subject, including snakes, flowers, koi, skulls, pinups, sharks, dragons, tigers, and more. We dare you to go five pages without finding your next tattoo.





DRAWN TOGETHER

Some of the best things start with paper and pencil, from your next tattoo to the latest movie special effects. Sketch Theatre (sketchtheatre.com) captures tattooers and other creative types in the act. "There are so many professionals in creative careers that share the love of simply sketching and doodling with pencil on paper," explains Lily Feliciano, executive producer. Feliciano and her crew make time-lapse videos of artists sketching, add tunes from bands such as The Bronx, and then post the footage online.

Started by Alex Alvarez, a visual effects artist who recently worked on *Avatar*, Sketch Theatre hopes to expose aspiring artists to the variety of careers available. "There is a world of opportunity out there for people gifted with drawing talent, and they need to be exposed to it," Feliciano says. Since that world includes tattooing, the site has videos featuring the work of Corey Miller, Nikko Hurtado, Nick Baxter, Adrian Dominic, and Shawn Barber. "That list is packed with mind-blowing talent … but there are so many more incredible tattooists I would love to bring on!" Feliciano says. Next, she hopes to offer limited edition prints of sketches and organize a second gallery show.

CHANEL, KARL PROUSE/CATWALKING/GETTY IMAGES

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Bartender MaryHelen Guadiana gives away one free hangover with the purchase of any tequila.



DON JULIO 1942
The Don himself created this limited edition bottling, named after the year this fine distillery was established. It's smooth, rich, and clean; he clearly made a tequila you can't refuse. ($125)



DON ROBERTO AÑEJO
Aged for 18 months in oak barrels, this herby and super-smooth tequila has notes of grilled pepper, leather, and wood on the front and finishes with citrus and butter. ($64)



CASA DRAGONES
Priced at about $300, this tequila is one of the most expensive on the market. Handcrafted by a "maestro tequilero," it combines platinum tequila with a hint of extra añejo and comes in a crystal decanter. The ultimate tequila experience.



HERRADURA AÑEJO
Be careful—this Herradura is so smooth you might forget there's actually alcohol in it. If you let this (or any of these tequilas) anywhere near salt, lemon, or margarita mix, we will personally revoke your drinking license. ($60)

SMOOTH OPERATORS

Tequila isn't just for shooting anymore. It's for sipping. Okay, fine, you can still shoot it.

Most tequila is downed with the close-your-eyes-and-jump approach. You slam a shot, cram a lime in your mouth, and then … wake up naked … next to a total stranger … in a jail cell. But we're here to defend the sipping of our little friend, and even to go as far as to say that tequila (*ahem*, good tequila) should be held in the same regard as single malt scotch or cognac. The reason you might be wary of our south-of-the-border friend is that you probably bought extremely shitty tequila when you were younger. There is actually a far greater spectrum of tequila to choose from. According to MaryHelen Guadiana, a bartender at Los Feliz in New York City, "Tequila is not just for shooting and bad hangovers anymore. There's a whole new world of delicate, complex tequilas that have been aged in old American bourbon barrels and have hints of similar flavors."

Good tequila is out there, and it doesn't need the "lick it, shoot it, suck it" treatment for you to choke it down. A high-end tequila just needs you to sip it. Here are the most important things to look for when picking up a bottle of good tequila: First, if you see the word *mixto* or *gold* on the bottle, put it back. Up to 49 percent of these tequilas are hangover-inducing sugar. Instead, stick to only 100 percent pure agave tequilas and you'll save on the Tylenol the next day. Second, pick either reposado or añejo. Reposados have been aged for a minimum of two months, while anejos have been aged a minimum of one year—and they're usually priced accordingly. Aging tequila in oak barrels smooths it out and gives it a complexity that makes it sip-worthy, and the longer it's aged, the smoother it tastes. Guadiana says it best: "Treat tequila like someone you dated in college. They were young, immature, and at times made you nauseous, but now they've aged well and are oh so smooth." —*Cory Jones*

HAIR AND MAKEUP, BRANDY MCDONALD

photo by CHRIS SHONTING

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PHOTOS, CHRISTOPHER LOVE; STYLING, HAROLD JAY MELVIN; MAKEUP, JOEL MARRIOTT FOR MAC COSMETICS; HAIR, JESSICA BOND; MODEL, SARAH MILLER

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SOUND ADVICE



JOHNNY CASH
American VI: Ain't No Grave
[American/Lost Highway]
Since passing away in 2003, Johnny Cash has become the 2Pac of country music, pumping out posthumous albums from his now legendary sessions with Rick Rubin. If *American VI: Ain't No Grave* is the final installment, it's a fitting way to go out. Comprising cover songs ranging from Sheryl Crow's foreboding "Redemption Day" to the Ed McCurdy classic "Last Night I Had the Strangest Dream," the album reaffirms the fact that Cash could effortlessly create lasting music with his signature tenor and minimalist instrumentation. The standout track on the album is the previously unreleased Cash original "I Corinthians 15:55," a redemptive song that sees Cash making peace with his own passing.



DR. DOG
Shame, Shame
[ANTI-]
Dr. Dog have always prided themselves on their lo-fi aesthetic, so it's slightly odd that they worked with producer Rob Schnapf (Elliott Smith, The Vines) on their latest. Thankfully, the improved production enhances the band's sound on harmony-rich songs like "Shadow People." While *Shame, Shame* still teems with the band's brand of psychedelia, confessional songs like "I Only Wear Blue" showcase a darker side, proving there is real emotion beneath the atonal guitar solos and space-age effects. "You could say that we're alone but we're lonely together," the band intones on the unsettling "Jackie Wants a Black Eye"—and that sentiment is far more embracing than it is alienating.



DROPKICK MURPHYS
Live on Lansdowne, Boston MA
[Born & Bred Records]
The Dropkick Murphys' St. Patrick's Day shows in their hometown of Boston have become the stuff of legends—and hangovers. *Live on Lansdowne, Boston MA* captures this annual event so accurately that you can almost taste the Guinness. The 20-song compilation spans the band's decade-plus career and showcases their Celtic-inspired punk, from upbeat traditionals like "Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ya" to the piano-driven sing-along "Tessie" and crowd-pleasing "I'm Shipping Up to Boston." *Live on Lansdowne* is teeming with fan favorites that prove the Dropkick Murphys' brand of music translates just as well in an arena as it does in a musty barroom.



GOLDFRAPP
Head First
[Mute]
Whatever Goldfrapp do—from thumping electronica to glammed up romps—they do it for the dance floor. The British electronic music duo's fifth full-length, *Head First*, is loaded with pulsating pop gems, such as "Alive," that are a step away from the baroque pop of their previous album—and tailor-made for getting down. While *Head First* does occasionally get close to disco territory, the synthesizer-driven romps like "Shiny and Warm" and "Dreaming" keep the album relevant, not retro. If you're not an admirer of Goldfrapp, *Head First* probably won't be the album that converts you; but if you are a fan, this is exactly what you've been waiting for your DJ to play.



THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN
Option Paralysis
[Season of Mist]
Boy, have we missed The Dillinger Escape Plan. While some of the time since the prog-metal band released 2007's *Ire Works* was certainly spent practicing guitar scales, it seems much of it was dedicated to songwriting, as *Option Paralysis* sees the band finally realizing their Faith No More obsession without abandoning their own schizophrenic sound. That doesn't mean the band has gone soft, proven by the seizure-inducing tech metal masterpiece "Good Neighbor" and sinisterly syncopated "Room Full of Eyes." The biggest surprise is the album's closer, "Parasitic Twins," a NIN-worthy track that (like other sonic experiments on the album) the band manages to make their own.



MATT POND PA
The Dark Leaves
[Altitude Records]
Matt Pond PA may not have the same hype surrounding them that peers like Vampire Weekend do, but when it comes to sweetly satisfying indie rock, it's hard to top Pond's unique brand of heartbreak. Their eighth album doesn't disappoint; from orchestral-tinged ballads such as "Running Wild" to ambient excursions like "Winter Fawn," the album sees Pond evoking everyone from Death Cab for Cutie to Bon Iver (without copping too much from either artist). Those comparisons noted, it's pretty clear *The Dark Leaves* isn't ideal for a house party. But if you're in the mood to wallow in your own sorrows, we can't recommend a better soundtrack for suffering. —*Jonah Bayer*

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Russell Manley will not sing you songs from *Sweeney Todd* during your shave. Don't even ask.

BEARD SCIENCE

NYC stylist Russell Manley shows you how to shed that winter scruff.

When the weather warms up, it's time to ditch that beard and lose the leftovers that have been hiding in there since Thanksgiving. Once you uncover the neck tattoo that you don't remember getting, you won't want it buried under little red bumps. We asked stylist Russell Manley, the owner of New York City salon Tommy Guns, for some tips on how to do it right, especially since you're probably going to be shaving more frequently now that spring has arrived (it's not your imagination; hair does grow faster in warmer weather). Manley suggests shaving after a shower because hot water opens pores and softens hair. Once you're ready for the razor, good gear is definitely helpful (see right for suggestions), but technique is also important. "Shave in the direction the hair grows to prevent ingrown hairs and razor burn," says Manley. "Your neck hair normally grows in a different direction than the hair on your face, so check it out closely and direct the razor accordingly." To finish, rinse with cool water, blot your face dry, and apply a lotion *without* alcohol. Burning your face doesn't prove that you're a man. That's what motorcycles are for. —*Jennifer Goldstein*



Gillette Fusion HydraGel
The name sounds (and the bottle looks) like NASA equipment. But unlike astronaut ice cream, this gel ($5, drugstores) is highly satisfying, with a slick feel that lets your razor glide smoothly.



Sharps Kid Glove Oil-Free Pre-Shave Stick
Manley suggests rubbing this balm ($16, sharpsusa.com) over your neck to soften the hairs so your blade slices smoothly. Don't confuse this with deodorant or you'll have oddly soft pit hair.



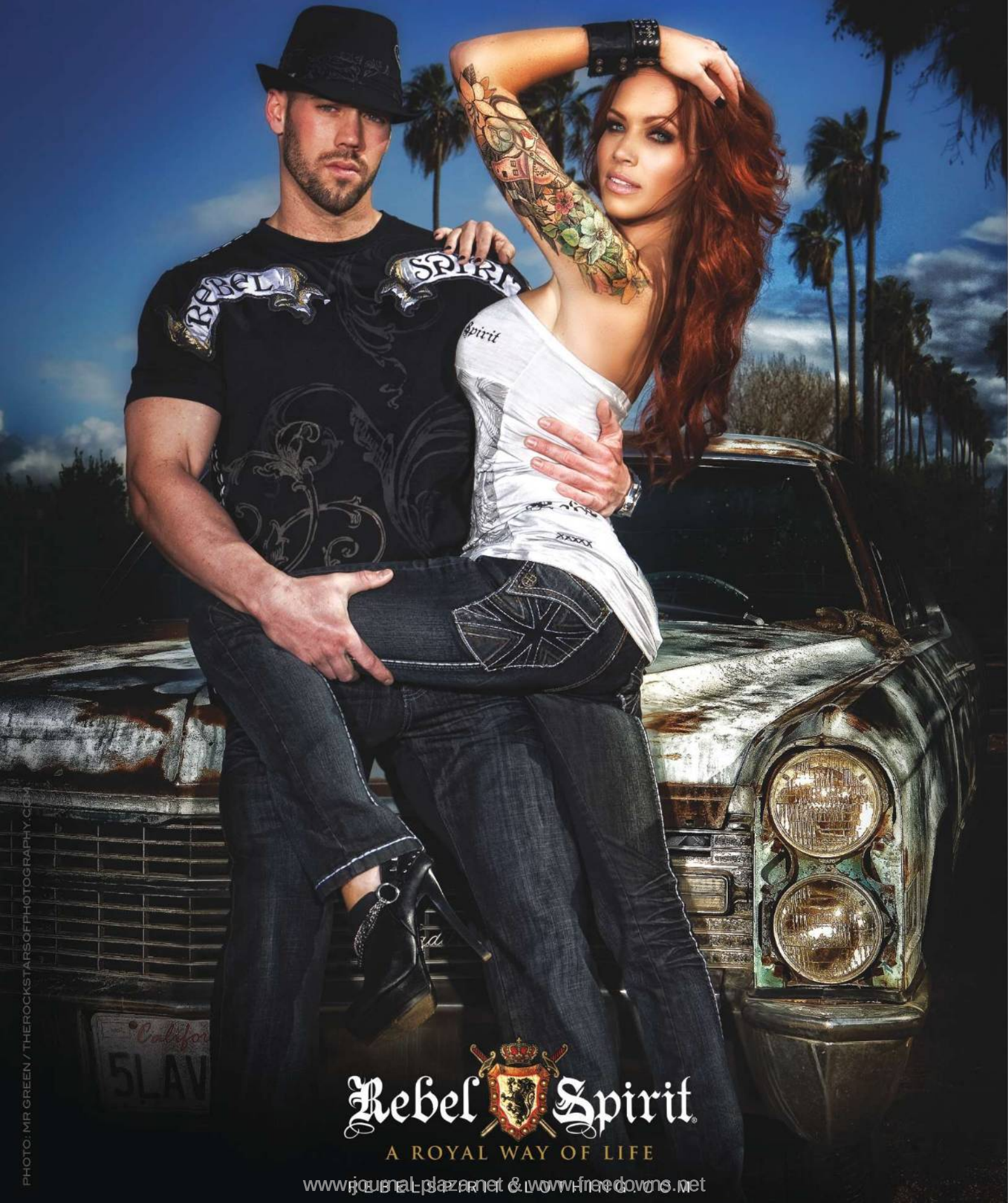
Schick Hydro 5
The INKED staffer who neck tested this new high-tech razor (drugstores) said it was the best shave he'd ever had. He usually looks like a yeti, so believe it.



Barc Bump Down
Alcohol can dry and irritate skin, causing ingrown hairs, according to Manley. Use an alcohol-free aftershave lotion like this one ($20, getbarc.com), which also heals the bumps you still have from the shave you gave yourself before you read this article.

photo by ERIC VOGEL

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GAME ON



Final Fantasy XIII
Systems: PlayStation 3, Xbox 360
It took nearly four years to develop the latest Final Fantasy game, and to answer fanboys everywhere: Yes, it's worth the wait. This time, the role-playing juggernaut introduces a fresh set of spiky-haired, androgynous protagonists in whose hands the fate of the world balances. To get the job done, players must skillfully employ the improved Active Time Battle system, which now allows you to chain together attacks for a combo bonus. Balancing tactics with the new Role and Paradigm systems, players can fine-tune their party to unleash deadly barrages on enemies and alter strategies on the fly. You'll come for the fantastic creature summoning sequences, marvel at the unparalleled cinematic presentation, stay to unlock new abilities, and remember the flat-ironed hair and leather jackets.



MLB 10: The Show
System: PlayStation 3
Can you rattle off the lineup of the 1951 New York Yankees at a moment's notice? If so, MLB 10: The Show is your game. The deepest baseball simulation in the majors returns with its signature game play, plus a few additions. The new Catcher Mode in The Show lets any wannabe Joe Mauer call games from behind the plate and gun down base runners foolish enough to test their arm strength, while the expanded All-Star Break festivities let you go against all-time greats like Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig in the Home Run Derby. Later, string together your own *SportsCenter* highlight package of web gems and long balls to share online with the new Movie Maker tool. Now if we could just get someone to deliver a beer and a hot dog to our couch.



God of War III
System: PlayStation 3
Don't get on the Ghost of Sparta's bad side. His rap sheet is the stuff of ages: He murdered his former boss (the god Ares), attempted fratricide, and kick-started a war against the rest of the Greek gods. The third and final chapter of his story finds Kratos knocking on the door of Mount Olympus. With the aid of the Titans and his deadly double-chained blades, Kratos has the necessary allies and tools to exact his vengeance upon Zeus—and drop any Greek god foolish enough to stand in his way. As with its instant-classic predecessors, God of War III presents jaw-dropping battlefields with a huge sense of scale. Armed with the most stylish combat on the planet and a control system its competitors are blatantly ripping off, this finale cements God of War's membership in the video game pantheon.



Red Dead Redemption
Systems: PlayStation 3, Xbox 360
Finally, a Western worth a fistful of dollars. To succeed where other outlaws have failed, Rockstar Games takes a page out of its Grand Theft Auto playbook, creating a massive open world filled with Mexican bandits, rogue lawmen, and saloon brawls. As the Industrial Revolution sets in, big government gets dirty in an effort to straighten out the wild West. Their proposition to reformed renegade John Marston: Hunt down your former posse or lose the wife and kid. To find the traitors who left him for dead years back, Marston rides out to Mexico, Texas, and the Pacific Northwest. With bounties to collect and animals to hunt, Marston won't have much time for sightseeing, but players can activate the slo-mo feature during shoot-outs to gun down any rotten four-flusher in their way. —*Matt Bertz*

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MOTHER'S LITTLE HELPER

Is your bathroom cabinet still filled with ozone-shredding aerosol cans? To help repay your debt to mother nature, Kiehl's has created a collection of **AÇAÍ DAMAGE-PROTECTING TONING MISTS** in honor of Earth Day. Each eco-friendly spray ($26, kiehls.com) has a label designed by musician Pharrell Williams, actress Julianne Moore, artist Jeff Koons, or pro surfer Malia Jones, and 100 percent of the proceeds go to The Rainforest Alliance. It won't completely repair the hole in the ozone caused by your athlete's-foot spray, but it's a start.

TUNED IN

Graffiti-covered cars and boom boxes are long dead in the New York City subway system. (Don't worry: Smelly bums are still plentiful!) But the **SONY TRIK IPOD DOCK** ($130, sonystyle.com) serves your nostalgia by bumping 75W of sound from your iPod or iPhone (or other system via the auxiliary input) through a tagged-up subway car. Want a different look? The system includes four swappable skins, and others can be purchased from skinit.com.



LOVIN' CUP

Old-school Philadelphia art fixture Larry McGearty was the spark behind the Sailor Jerry brand explosion that now includes everything from T-shirts to spiced rum. His latest project is Sweet Gwendoline, a line that McGearty describes as "a little naughty and never too nice." The first release is a teacup collection titled **TIED UP FOR TEA TIME** ($25 each, Amberella Gallery, 610-283-5669) that features silhouette pinups on porcelain. Despite their refined elegance, we've found they hold Coors just fine.



TEACUP, SHANNON MORAN

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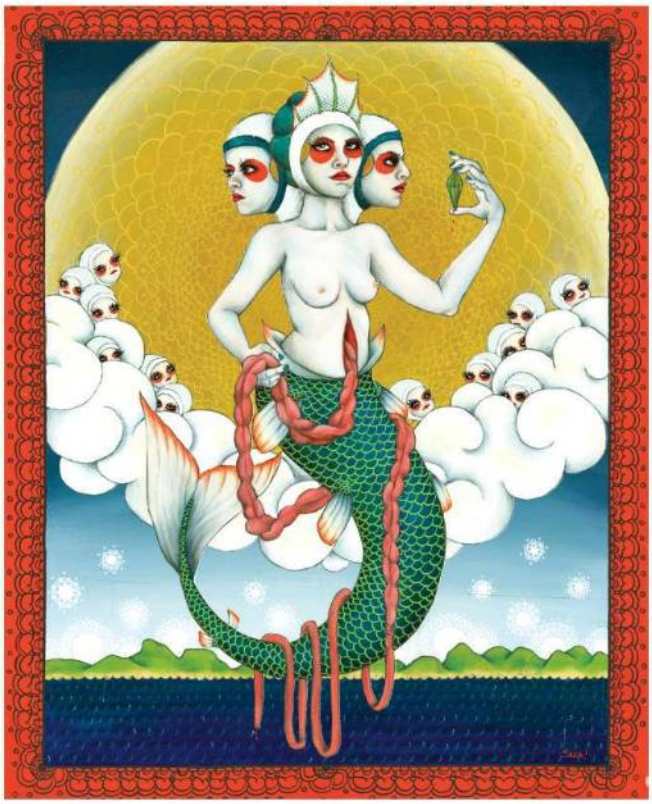
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WELCOME TO SARA LAND

Make yourself at home in a world of mermaids, abominable snowmen, and *chupacabras*.



Clockwise from top left: *Vomit Twins*; *The Blood Dragon*; artist Sara Antoinette Martin.

Sara Antoinette Martin's art is so hard to categorize that she'd rather not even try. "I'd just tell them to Google me," the Brooklyn artist says when asked to explain her style to someone who's never seen it. The trusty search engine didn't clarify things. "Her work is a conversation of emotions and reflections of how she sees herself in this world and how the world sees her," her site sara-land.net explains. She creates each element—usually stemming from religious icons, alchemic symbols, imaginary sea creatures, and more—individually and then regroups them to form a wacky-slash-creepy collage. "I view myself as a filter," she says. "I take all my influences, filter them through myself, and spit them back out as a mishmash of symbols to illustrate complete emotions."

When it comes to her own tattoos, though, she doesn't like to be the one doing the creating. Her biggest tattoo, a thigh piece by Eli Quinters of Smith Street Tattoo in Brooklyn, portrays a giant squid battling a whale on a pirate ship under a thunderstorm. She says she usually brings him an idea or a basic sketch and lets him run with the theme rather than replicate her work. "I'd get tired of looking at my own stuff every day. Or get mad at myself that I didn't do a better job."

While her work has been featured everywhere from Kid Robot to Chumby (the adorable Wi-Fi device), Martin is still trying to figure out her next move. She left her photography gig at Kid Robot in July of 2008 when she had a slew of toy designs coming out—then the recession hit. Although she works part-time as an art assistant for Tara McPherson and is getting into textile design as a way to make money, she really wants to focus on fine art. "I need to figure out how I'm gonna survive being an artist." (Note to readers: Go to store.skelecore.com and buy a thing or three!) Another gig she has entertained: learning how to tattoo.

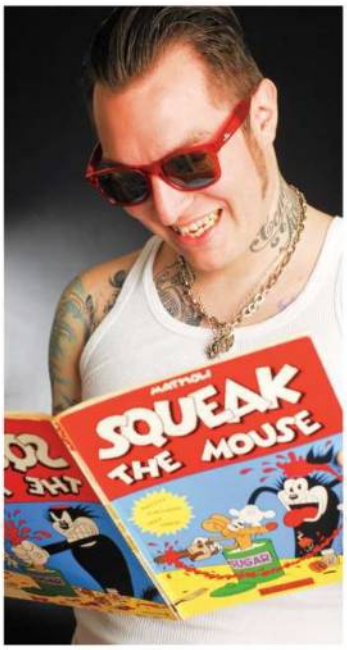
"I think I'd be good at it," she says, "though after talking to people, I realize it's a whole other universe of art making." For now, her goal is to work as an apprentice or a shop girl to get more exposure. She acknowledges it'll be at least a few years of hard work—but hey, at least she already knows how to draw. —*Lisa Freedman*

PHOTO, SASPHOTOS AND PRIMAL STARE STUDIOS

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DESTINATION: BUENOS AIRES

Tattooer **Ernesto Vasquez** guides us through the streets and bars of his hometown.

Ernesto Vasquez could have worked anywhere. And he has made his Buenos Aires studio, Historia de Mi Vida, just as international as the city itself. The busy shop in Buenos Aires's Palermo neighborhood welcomes a roster of revolving artists from around the world. And Vasquez and his two partners spend a few months each year working abroad, usually in Spain, Brazil, or Germany, collecting new skills to augment their global styles. "People come from Europe and the States to get inked here," he says, noting that they're drawn by cheaper prices and the burgeoning custom culture in the city.

Global artistry mixed with local humor has earned the studio a solid reputation. "We're always looking for new things," says Vasquez, who even brings his equipment along on vacation. "But really, we're old-school guys." —*Stephanie Lim*

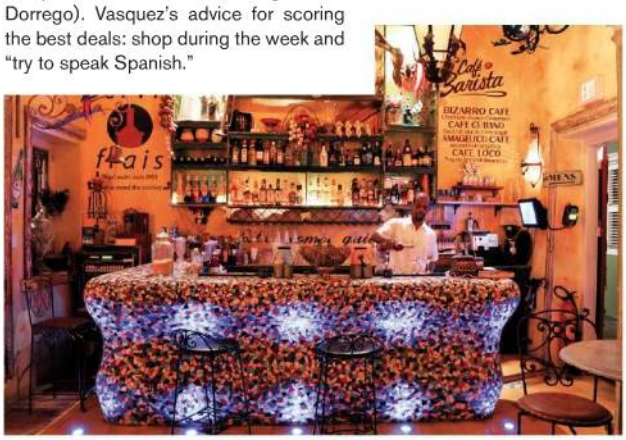


BEST CEMETERY The otherworldly Recoleta Cemetery is "an amazing acropolis," says Vasquez of the resting place for Eva Perón and former presidents and poets. Admission is free, and you can spend hours marveling at the elaborate tombs and sculptures. Close by, the Recoleta Cultural Center (centroculturalrecoleta.org) showcases the city's diverse art scene, including works from up-and-coming comic illustrators and multimedia artists.



BEST BARGAIN HUNTING
Buenos Aires is full of antiques and those who love to hunt them. At the local *feria*, you can find anything from Pink Floyd records and dusty Leica film cameras to 18th-century maps and costume jewelry. Vasquez hits the Dorrego Street flea market (Dorrego and Niceto Vega) in Palermo to find unique fixtures for his apartment and studio. Prices are lower than they are at the more touristy San Telmo weekend antique market (Defensa through Plaza Dorrego). Vasquez's advice for scoring the best deals: shop during the week and "try to speak Spanish."

BEST DINNER & DRINKS
After closing up the studio on a busy Saturday, Vasquez and the crew sometimes grab dinner with their clients at Rincón Parrillero (Medrano 1293), a small, Argentinean-style grill where Vasquez will indulge in "any kind of meat." For drinks, he heads to Palermo's Mundo Bizarro (mundobizarrobar.com; Serrano 1222) to enjoy the best cocktails in the city in a place with an "American thrash culture" vibe. Sip on the bar's namesake cocktail—the Mundo Bizarro Monsoon, a vodka-based drink mixed with melon, oranges, and pineapple—while enjoying rockabilly music and Bettie Page movies projected on the back wall.



BEST BIG NIGHT OUT
Club Roxy (theroxybsas.com.ar; Niceto Vega 5542) in Palermo Hollywood is a good bet for live rock shows. In nearby Palermo Soho, Vasquez prefers the low-key Crónico Bar (cronicobar.com; JL Borges 1646) over the neighborhood's trendier bars. The covered smoking area makes it a go-to destination even in poor weather. Vasquez has been frequenting the spot for years because of its cheap food and drinks, including blended *batidos* and another local favorite: cola mixed with Fernet, a bitter Italian digestif. Don't be surprised if you find yourself stumbling out well after sunrise—Crónico is open 24 hours a day.



BEST CULTURAL MASH-UP
It might not be the prettiest sight in Buenos Aires, but La Bombonera, the Boca Juniors' soccer stadium, radiates energy and passion. Although Vasquez's own home team has since left the city, he still loves a great soccer game or concert at the legendary stadium. Even if there's nothing riot-worthy going on at La Bombonera, its La Boca neighborhood is a great spot to experience the mixture of Latin American and European culture that *porteños* (natives of Buenos Aires) are so proud of. Grab a fresh-pressed orange juice off the street and experience the grittiness of the docks, the romance of tango at a late-night *milonga*, and the city's Italian influence in the brightly painted buildings of Caminito.

RECOLETA CEMETERY, COURTESY OF RECOLETA.COM.AR; LA BOCA NEIGHBORHOOD AND SAN TELMO, COURTESY OF ARGENTINA OFFICE OF TOURISM

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Clockwise from top: Vans God Save the Queen T-shirt, vans.com; Volcom Cubist Girl T-shirt, volcom.com; RVCA crest T-shirt, karmaloop.com; Neff Headwear T-shirt, neffheadwear.com; Me Against the World logo T-shirt, meagainsttheworld.net.

DARK KNIGHTS

STYLIST, KATHLEEN D. FRIEDMAN

photo by THOMAS LIGGETT

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Clockwise from top: Shanghai Tang Double Happiness bag, shanghaitang.com; Cowboysbelt brown leather bag, cowboysbelt.com; Woolrich John Rich & Bros. brown leather bag, woolrich.com; King Baby Studio black skull messenger bag, kingbabystudio.com; Perry Ellis black nylon and brown leather bag, perryellis.com.

BRAND NEW BAG

STYLIST, KATHLEEN D. FRIEDMAN

photo by THOMAS LIGGETT

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Clockwise from top left: Ford Fiesta on the move; Fiesta in white; interior.

PARTY ON WHEELS

Detroit hopes the Fiesta, a popular European subcompact, will win over the hearts, minds, and Twitter feeds of young Americans.

FORD FIESTA
1.6-liter four-cylinder
118 horsepower
starts at $13,320

People in the United States are understandably suspicious of Europe, what with its rampant socialism, funny-looking money, and shockingly unattractive men's sweaters. That's why it may seem odd for Ford to be so gung ho about importing the Fiesta, its economical subcompact that has sold phenomenally well across the Atlantic. But Ford clearly knows what it's doing. After all, the company announced a $2.7 billion profit in 2009, a year after people proclaimed the Detroit auto industry as broken as, well, the city of Detroit. And the Fiesta is all but guaranteed to make a splash with eye-catching styling that makes one think, fittingly, of the cars on European roads that cause visiting Americans to wonder, Why don't we have cars like that?

Well, now we do.

While Ford's most famous nameplate remains the historic Mustang, the Fiesta—which is about to become a truly global car, rolling out on several other continents in addition to Europe and North America—represents the company's future. And that may be why, long before the cars were scheduled to hit dealerships, Ford gave test cars to a gaggle of Gen Y'ers all over the country so that they could Tweet, blog, and Facebook all about their experiences in the vehicles. Ford's public relations overlords naturally had some control over what the testers said, but they were no doubt confident that the reports would be favorable.

The Fiesta's interior feels surprisingly high-end for an affordable American car, with an intuitive control layout and plenty of room up front and in back. Under the hood, a 1.6-liter, 118-horsepower four-cylinder engine feels and sounds far more robust than the numbers would seem to indicate, with plenty of torque for evasive maneuvers on city streets and interstates. Although that engine will be the only one offered, the Fiesta comes in both a four-door sedan and a five-door hatch with either a five-speed manual or a six-speed automatic. It also features three trim levels with options like Ford's voice-activated Sync multimedia system, LED headlamps, and 16-inch wheels.

But no matter how impressive it looks in person or on paper, the Fiesta will live or die based on its fuel mileage. Ford predicts that the six-speed automatic will get about 40 mpg. What's that in kilometers? Ah, who cares? —*Ky Henderson*

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INKED PEOPLE

"That's the history of Australia; we're a convict country. That's my heritage. ... I thought there was no better way to remind myself of that heritage than to painfully inscribe it on my back. I really want it to hurt a lot." *–Daniel Merriweather*



photo by STEVEN PERILLOUX

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DANIEL MERRIWEATHER

Even before he'd released an album in the States, Australian singer Daniel Merriweather was selling out venues like Los Angeles's Troubadour and having big-name acts like Samantha Ronson open for him. "I'm always kind of shocked when people know my music," he muses. "But I guess that's the beauty of the Internet."

Now that his stellar debut, *Love & War*, has been released, there will surely be even more dedicated fans. With strains of jazzy, blues-infused pop, the songs are all autobiographical, according to the pompadoured Merriweather, especially "Cigarettes," about a lost love being replaced by alcohol, bar fights, and, well, cigarettes. The 28-year-old has certainly come a long way from being Mark Ronson's protégé (that's Merriweather's voice on Mark's 2003 semi-hit "Stop Me") and the opening act for Kanye West and Justin Timberlake.

Love is a common theme in Merriweather's music—and his life. His one tattoo, on his right arm, is a sprawling Latin phrase that means "for love or money," which he got in a local shop in Melbourne when he was 18. The reason behind it? "I was young and trying to be self-important," he laughs. As for it being in Latin, that was also a teen's whimsy. "I wanted to put it in a different language most people can't read."

But no one will have a problem seeing the next tattoo he has planned: a 100-word excerpt from a poem found in Robert Hughes's *The Fatal Shore* that will cover his back (yes, he can recite the entire passage, which begins "For night and day, we toil and toil …"). It's an idea Merriweather has been kicking around for months, and one that's close to his heart. The passage was written by an unknown convict who was exiled from London to Australia. "That's the history of Australia; we're a convict country," Merriweather says. "That's my heritage. So when I read this book, the verse just stood out to me. It's kind of a painful thing to hear. So I thought there was no better way to remind myself of that heritage than to painfully inscribe it on my back. I really want it to hurt a lot." —*Kathleen Perricone*

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Left to right: Dee Dee, Jules, Bambi, Frankie Rose

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DUM DUM GIRLS

If you think that punk rock and '60s girl groups are mutually exclusive, you haven't heard the Dum Dum Girls. The group, which was started in 2008 as a solo project by frontwoman Dee Dee, initially got together in order to perform at last year's CMJ Music Marathon. But in their very first practice, things instantly clicked. "Right after that short little tour we all got Dum Dum tattoos on our middle fingers, and even if we never did anything else it would have helped solidify that memory," Dee Dee says via cell phone from the Oakland airport at the very un-rock-star hour of 7:30 a.m.

Now Dee Dee and her fellow Dum Dums, guitarist Jules, bassist Bambi, and drummer Frankie Rose, have released their Sub Pop debut, *I Will Be*. "Sonically, I like the way old records from the '60s and '70s sound," Dee Dee says of the album. "I wanted the energy of a punk band coupled with all the vocal aspects of the girl-group stuff," she continues. "I'm a big choir nerd, so I have a lot of fun figuring out the vocal harmonies. And then the music can remain kind of rudimentary because it's not really the focal point for me." The band's mission statement can be encapsulated in the fact that their two most popular covers are GG Allin's "Don't Talk to Me" and the Rolling Stones' "Play With Fire." "I love the early Stones songs and production, and I love the energy of early GG Allin and that early punk stuff, so they're both representative of big influences," Dee Dee says.

Aside from her Dum Dum Girls tattoo, Dee Dee also sports a Johnny Cash tribute on her right triceps, a dove on her right biceps, her husband's name with an anchor plus her grandmother's name and a heart on her left arm, and the initial of a friend who passed away on her inner arm. The majority of them were done by Dewayne Norton of Tower Tattoo in San Diego. "Almost all of the tattoos I've gotten have been in remembrance of people who have passed away," Dee Dee responds when asked about the commemorative nature of her ink. "It's a double reminder to keep them in my thoughts, and to be aware of the fact that I'm still around and not take that for granted."

When asked about her next tattoos, Dee Dee admits the future isn't quite as bright as her band's—yet. "I don't have any intention of accumulating that many tattoos or designing a sleeve, but I'm sure I'll get more," she says. "I kind of like keeping them out of sight—but I've got a lot of arm space left, so we'll see." —*Jonah Bayer*

photo by LAUREN DUKOFF

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MICHAEL FAIRALL

There's something about Hawaii that makes leaders of the men who are drawn to its islands (Sailor Jerry and Barack Obama being two of the more famous examples). Take native Pennsylvanian Michael Fairall: In 2003, he was a transfer student at Hawaii Pacific University with a stick-and-poke on his foot and a leprechaun on his shoulder. Today, at 28, he's the sleeved-out owner and principal RME of Mokulua Woodworking, a green building firm in Kailua, HI, with 21 employees and counting. But despite his obvious leadership skills, Fairall is quick to credit others—including God, his family, and his employees—for the rapid rise of his business. "The people I work with are the reason we're successful at what we do," he says.

What they do is environmentally friendly home building and remodeling. "We're not of the mind-set, Here's how you're supposed to frame a house," says Fairall. "Our company is young and flexible, so we approach each project thinking, Can we reuse it? Can we salvage it for this project or maybe another one?" Unlike other builders who have earned a certified green professional designation from the National Association of Home Builders, Fairall says his company has been operating this way from the beginning, before there was even a green-building bandwagon to jump on. "I think we're more conscious of the environment because we're young. We grew up hearing about how it's important to save nature and protect the ozone," he says. "We all surf or dive, so we don't want runoff water from our construction sites pouring into the ocean. We want to keep it clean and not have reef fish disappearing."

As noble as that goal is, all the green building techniques in the world wouldn't have made Mokulua Woodworking a success if the homes they built weren't well-crafted. "I'm really proud of the work we do," Fairall says, citing a challenging addition his company recently completed as one of his favorite projects to date. "The house was from the 1940s, and we found windows and materials from that era to repurpose and use in the new wing," he says. "Honestly, you look at it, and you can't tell where the addition begins—that's really hard to do with new construction."

When he speaks about his projects, it's obvious Fairall loves the details of hands-on woodworking, despite the fact that he spends most of his time in the office. "I miss banging nails," he admits. "You can't get stressed when you're doing that. When you take the tool belt off, the job goes away. But dealing with clients and employees … I thank God at night for what I do, but it *is* stressful."

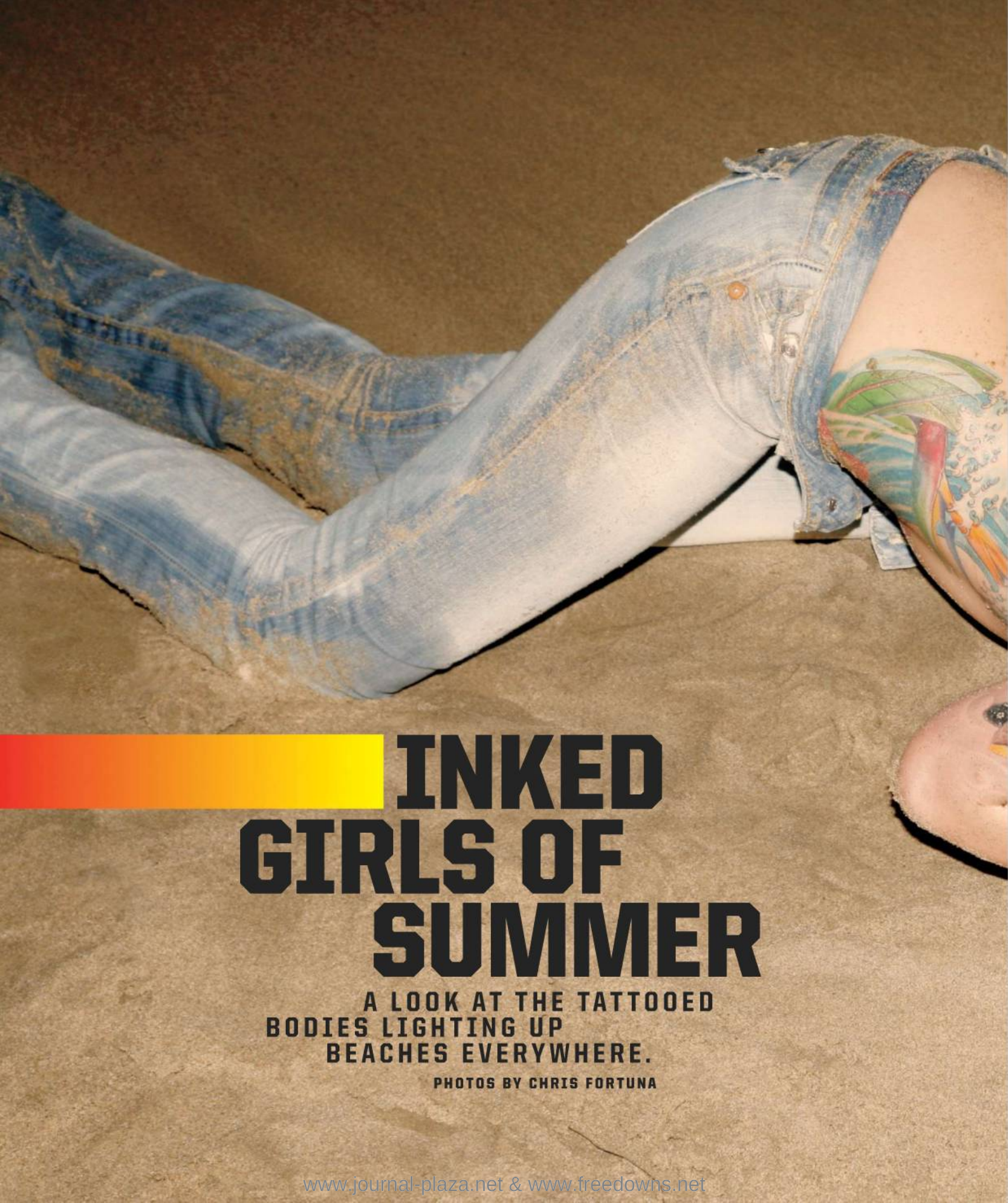
To unwind, he paddles an outrigger canoe, spearfishes, hikes, and visits his favorite shop, Koi Tattoo, in Kailua. "Lisa Bennett over there is amazing," he says. She's done the majority of Fairall's work, including his most meaningful piece, a depiction of St. Michael on his arm, close to his heart. But there's still some room left for more, and he plans to go back to Bennett soon. "In Hawaii, people think of tattoos differently than they do in other states. Out here, you know, you turn 16, get a driver's license, and get a tattoo," he laughs. "Sure, some clients look at me differently, but they know tattoos are like a rite of passage here." If that's the case, Fairall has more experience than builders twice his age. —*Jennifer Goldstein*

photo by MARCO GARCIA

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INKED GIRLS OF SUMMER

A LOOK AT THE TATTOOED BODIES LIGHTING UP BEACHES EVERYWHERE.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS FORTUNA

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Earth Angel bikini; Rachel Roy necklace. Previous page: True Religion jeans.

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NAME: **ANDREA**
FROM: LONG BEACH, CA

Summer means... Surfing! I can't get enough of it. When the sun is up and the water's warm, nothing's better. I plan on having a relaxing summer, surfing, possibly taking some trips to Mexico, hanging out with friends and family. Good times.

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NAME: GERA
FROM: LOS ANGELES

This summer... I'll be singing, "Summer lovin', had me a blast..." –in Europe, that is! This summer will be my epic Euro trip, with beer tasting in Germany and seeing if the food in London holds true to the rumors!

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Kylza Ribas top; Earth Angel black bikini bottoms; Spragwerks necklace and rings; Naughty Monkey boots.

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Stylist's own vintage top; Betsey Johnson sunglasses; AA Kinal bracelet. Right: Stylist's own vintage top and sunglasses.

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NAME: IVY
FROM: LOS ANGELES

Summer means... Long days and warm nights. I'm a night owl, so I kind of get excited when I can hang outside at night in a spa or on the beach. I love camping, barbecuing, lounging on the beach, and going on motorcycle rides during the cooler part of the days. I'm also going to go skydiving for the first time!

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NAME: NIKKI
FROM: LOS ANGELES

This summer... I want to take a road trip solely for the purpose of thrift store shopping. I want to map out all these untapped vintage shops in the middle of nowhere and find lots of little treasures and oddities. I can just see it: driving home, my car packed with artifacts and ceramic cat figurines and old 1970s Peavey amplifiers strapped to the hood.

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Model's own underwear. Left: Free People gray top; Abercrombie & Fitch jean shorts; AA Kinal necklace.

Stylist: Autumn Steed
Hair: Michael Kanyon for Redken/celestineagency.com
Makeup: Patrick Tumey for Smashbox cosmetics/ celestineagency.com
Retouching: Shannon Moran
Location: The Malibu Motel

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BEST SUMMER EVER

The **INKED** guide to everywhere you'll want to be this year, from the wildest tattoo conventions to the world's biggest paintball battle. BY ELLEN THOMPSON

This summer will not be like last summer. Summer 2010 is going to rule, and it's going to rule hard. Come on, say it with us! Okay, now that we have your word, let's get this rolling. In order to make it the best summer ever, you're going to have to dig music, tattoos, and straight-up partying, which is why we're tipping you off to the best festivals and events the summer has to offer, complete with must-know insider tips. Paintball guns, public nudity, and a sunken ship will all be involved. Remember, we did agree that summer 2010 is going to rule.



PHOTO, COURTESY OF THE BONNAROO MUSIC FESTIVAL

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General admission: $234.50
(Check out the payment plan–seriously, there is one)

For a mere four days, utopia exists on a 700-acre farm in Manchester, TN, where there's a multistage camping festival with music and art. Attendees are encouraged to bring camping gear, bandannas, earplugs, and extra toilet paper. But in order not to disturb the peaceful vibe, near-flawless logistics, and unrivaled entertainment options, there are a few banned items, including Styrofoam coolers, glass containers, professional photography equipment, and peer pressure.

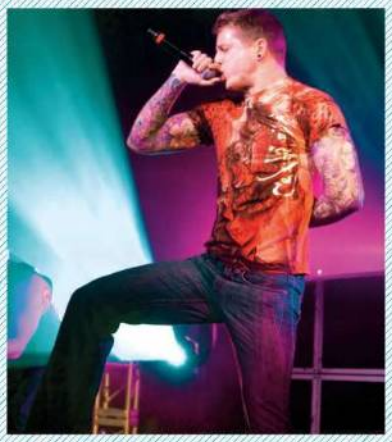
"There are some people who want to come to our event and have a beer, and there are some who want to experience our event and not do that," says Rick Farman, one of the event's promoters. "And then there are people who are recovering but still want to take in the music, but need a support group while they're here. And we're glad to support them." Between the lineup—including Weezer, Jay-Z, Phoenix, and others—and attractions like the Silent Disco, which features hundreds of headphone-equipped 'Rooers bopping around to a live DJ, Bonnaroo is this summer's quick "happy" fix. Just don't count on finding many sober people when the Flaming Lips cover Pink Floyd's *Dark Side of the Moon* album in its entirety at 2:30 a.m. Yowza.

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MUSINK MUSIC AND TATTOO FESTIVAL

April 9-11
Dallas
1-day pass: $25
3-day pass: $60
VIP pass: $75

"Be ready to party, because it will be a weekend jam-packed full of good times," says tattooer Oliver Peck, curator of the Dallas edition of the Musink Music and Tattoo Festival. Musink promoters recruited Peck, owner of Elm Street Tattoo in Dallas, to put together the California festival's first trek to the Lone Star State. The result is a little bit rock 'n' roll and a little bit country. Bands such as Shooter Jennings & The .357s, Lucero, and the Old 97's will twang your face off, while Scott Sylvia, Jeff Rassier, Corey Miller, Tony Hundahl, Clay Decker, and other tattooers do their thing. Promoters are also planning to have skateboard and BMX demos, a custom motorcycle show, and a Miss Musink pageant. "There'll be tons of sweet tattoos and lots of great bands," says Peck before offering this tip: "Get the tacos norteños at Pepe's and Mito's Mexican restaurant on Elm Street—and stop into Elm Street Tattoo to say hi to Tex!"







PHOTOS: MUSINK, COURTESY OF MUSINK.ORG; D-DAY, COURTESY OF DDAYADVENTUREPARK.COM





OKLAHOMA D-DAY

June 7-13
Wyandotte, OK
Preregistration: $70
(Factor in equipment and supplies)

It's time to choose a side. You're either with us, or you're against us, which means you're a German (no offense, Hasselhoff—we're talking D-Day here). Oklahoma D-Day is the world's largest paintball event, and it's no capture the flag. Rather, like the actual invasion of Normandy, several battles unfold across the field throughout the day, with 3,500 to 4,000 troops on foot and actual tanks forging ahead. The complex field of war is why Dewayne Convirs, the event's promoter, suggests that you study the history of the actual invasion, including individual units and their battles, for insight into the missions and objectives in Oklahoma D-Day. Since there is so much going on during the week, from five-person tournaments to sniper courses, you should plan your budget now. "Nothing is worse then burning up all of your paint and money before the main game," according to Convirs. "It's bad for you and extremely bad for your side. Commanders need you out on the field, giving 110 percent for the entire day on Saturday. It's fine if speedball is more your style, but you registered for Oklahoma D-Day, not an NPPL tournament." Likewise, if you just came to hang out in a campsite, Yellowstone would be a better choice, he adds.

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SKATE CAYMAN

June 8-August 21
Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands
1-week skate session: $75
1-hour surf session: $75

Attention class: Mr. Cole has two important lessons for new students at Skate Cayman. Yes, Chris Cole, a two-time X Games gold medalist, is more than a pro skater—he's also a teacher. Each summer, Cole teaches a week of skateboarding on the grounds of Black Pearl Skate & Surf in the Cayman Islands. And while listening to teachers is something no one wants to get down with during the summer months, Cole knows his stuff. Lesson one: "Stay hydrated! It is hot!" Reasonable enough, especially since Cole works up a sweat when shredding the largest outdoor concrete park in the world. "There is so much to skate and if you rush to do it all, you won't have a real special session," he says. "I like to focus on one obstacle for a while and then move on. Take your time." And while lesson two won't help you land smith grinds, it's still important. "Make sure to go snorkeling—it is incredible." Cole's advice: Start at the sunken ship near the park that sits right near the surface of the water. But don't ask him for tips on the park's Wave Loch surf machine; although there are classes to help you master the machine's 11-foot man-made waves, Cole has yet to get under its magical blue curl.

PHOTOS: SKATE CAYMAN, COURTESY OF THE BLACK PEARL; HELL CITY, ALISSA BRUNELLI, ALISSABRUNELLI.COM

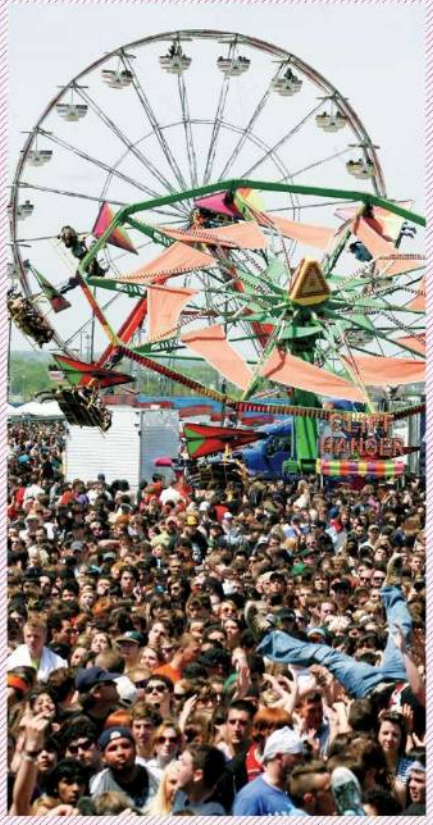








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BAMBOOZLE NEW JERSEY

May 1-2
East Rutherford, NJ
1-day pass: $57
2-day pass: $104
VIP pass: $300

Our tip for this year's Bamboozle music festival? Pick up the VIP pass and leave the parking lot to the kids. Sure, it's a bit pricey, but if you really want to experience Bamboozle, it's your best bet. It offers complimentary food vouchers, a limited-edition T-shirt, and a ticket to Hoodwink, where bands like The Maine will be covering Everclear's hits. And then there are the amusement rides, the private restroom, and the backstage tours, along with various performances and meet-and-greets with the likes of Weezer, MGMT, Polar Bear Club, Drake, and Kevin Devine.

Since Bamboozle is running nine stages this year, you might want to work on your time management skills before showing up at the Meadowlands. Between Paramore, Ke$ha, Angels & Airwaves, Motion City Soundtrack, OK Go, The Bled, and MC Chris, there's a lot to keep track of. Note to organizers: Next year, VIP status should include a personal assistant.





PHOTOS: MARK R. SULLIVAN/MARKRSULLIVAN.COM



HELL CITY TATTOO FESTIVALS

May 21-23, Columbus, OH
August 27-29, Phoenix
1-day pass: $18 (presale)
2-day pass: $35 (presale)
Weekend pass: $50 (presale)

Consider Hell City a state of mind, not a place. The long-running convention happens twice a year; the Columbus, OH, event is in late May, while the Biltmore Resort in Phoenix heats up in late August. "Hell City Phoenix is what we like to consider more of a tattoo vacation," says tattoo artist Durb Morrison, a Hell City organizer. "And it seems to really spoil the tattoo artists and collectors with the luxurious resort." While each fest undoubtedly has its own flavor and eclectic crowd, Morrison manages to grab artists from all over for both. Both feature attractions such as live bands, tattoo documentary screenings at the Hell City Sinema, and The Art Fusion Experiment, which has three to five artists collaborating, changing canvases every three to five minutes. "The artwork created during Art Fusion starts so vague and loose, leaving the viewers' imaginations open," Morrison says. "When the hellions come back around, they are usually amazed at the progress that happens in the span of just a few hours. The Art Fusion Experiment is definitely one of the highlights of Hell City."

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June 16–August 8
Various locations in Europe
Cost varies by location

SONISPHERE FESTIVALS



Dear European authorities: Please stock up on neck braces. For the first time in history, Metallica, Slayer, Megadeth, and Anthrax will appear on the same bill, a feat sure to cause reckless headbanging from Prague to Warsaw. The Sonisphere Festival amazingly managed to get the big four of thrash metal in the same place at the same time for the fest's Poland, Switzerland, and Czech Republic dates. "You know, it's always crazy over there," says Kerry King, Slayer's guitarist. "If you're hanging out for three days and you have beer going down, like I know it does over in Europe, you definitely have a chance for more craziness. And not every time we go do we hit Poland. So that should add something." While King is looking forward to catching up with the guys in Mastodon, who are confirmed for at least two dates, you should consider catching up with Iron Maiden or Iggy & The Stooges during the U.K. festival and possibly others.

King also has some advice when it comes to hitting up Sonisphere: "Pace yourself; it's a long day—it may be a long *couple* of days for some. So make sure you've got clean water, because you will get drunk to the point where you'll need it."







STURGIS 70TH ANNIVERSARY

August 9–15
Sturgis, SD

If you're going to ride, then you might as well be a Legends Rider. It's one of the most honored ways to roll up (alongside 500 riders fresh off a 50-mile ride from historic Deadwood, SD, to the Buffalo Chip campground) to the Sturgis Rally these days. You'll actually be able to sport an "I rode mine to Sturgis" patch for the week, not to mention help raise money for the Black Hills Children's Home and the Sturgis Motorcycle Museum and Hall of Fame. Oh, and there are always a ton of celebrities along for the ride, if that's your thing. If, on the other hand, ZZ Top is your thing, then make sure to catch them rocking out on one of the four music stages at Buffalo Chip. There's a pretty good chance you'll come across some public drinking and nudity, so go at your own pace. And make sure you schedule in time to check out the Miss Buffalo Chip Beauty Pageant—you know, the bikini one, or the lingerie one, or the biker apparel one. Just be careful: You can actually get married at this rally, and if you do, it's the real thing.

PHOTOS: SONISPHERE, KERRY KING, AP/AP/GETTY IMAGES; MOTORCYCLES (2), COURTESY OF SOUTH DAKOTA TOURISM BOARD; WOMAN ON MOTORCYCLE, IAN MUTCH

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INK-N-IRON TATTOO & KUSTOM CULTURE FESTIVAL

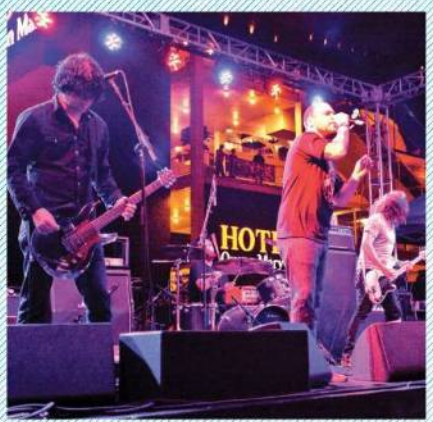
June 11-13
Long Beach, CA
1-day pass: $30 (online presale); $35 at the gate (with a $10 rebate if you get a tattoo!)
3-day pass: $60 (online presale)

You'll face a tough decision when you enter the sprawling grounds of the Ink-N-Iron Festival. Should you step aboard the historic *Queen Mary* ocean liner and scope out the 280 tattoo artists from 30 states and 25 countries, or stay on the grounds to stake out an optimal spot for the Pin-Up Pageant and check out the all-day music lineup, including a rumored appearance by the B-52s? Told ya it was going to be a tough one. Then again, the Ink-N-Iron Tattoo Festival, now in its seventh year, isn't your typical tattoo convention, and it's not just because it takes place on a 1930s luxury ship that boasts WWII service. Or because it draws about 60,000 tattoo enthusiasts to the West Coast each year. Besides the car show featuring pre-'63 hot rods, kustoms, classics, and vintage motorcycles, there's the ship itself. Juan Puente, an Ink-N-Iron host and veteran tattoo artist, dropped us a few tips on the accommodation front aboard the *Mary*, which has "played a large part in tattoo history, hosting some of the first tattoo conventions before magazines and TV, when it was just word-of-mouth." The ship's hotel is big but fills up every year, so book early. Also, rumor has it she's haunted. "The room we had last year was listed as haunted in a ghost book of the ship," Puente says. "The ghosts, however, gave us a break."











PHOTOS, NICOLE REED

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Homeward Bound

She's been a *TRL* icon and a twangy country Wrecker. Now, sultry singer Michelle Branch returns to her roots and traces her journey through the tattoos she picked up along the way.

By Alison Prato
Photos by Ari Michelson

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At just 26, singer-musician Michelle Branch has had a career with as many chapters and incarnations as someone twice her age. Her major label debut, *The Spirit Room*, came out in 2001 and featured the massive hit "Everywhere," which can be heard today in those ubiquitous commercials for Chase Bank ("'Cause you're everywhere to me/ And when I close my eyes it's you I see"). Just one year later, her collaboration with Santana, "The Game of Love," won the Grammy Award for best pop collaboration with vocals. And in 2003, at 19, Michelle was nominated for another Grammy—this time for best new artist (she lost to Norah Jones).

It was quite a meteoric rise in a time when female pop vocalists like Britney and Christina ruled the airwaves—and the MTV video landscape—with frothy, contrived bubblegum dance tracks. Michelle was the anti-Mouseketeer: a rootsy singer-songwriter who wasn't afraid to strap on a guitar and bust out an acoustic set at a local bar. She was pretty, yes, but it was an approachable attractiveness that made her more girl next door than girl on a poster above every teenage boy's bed.

In 2003, the single "Are You Happy Now?" from her album *Hotel Paper* was Grammy-nominated for best female rock vocal performance. During that time, Branch also tried acting, with roles on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*. Then, just as quickly as she'd risen, Michelle seemed to disappear from the mainstream scene—first getting married, then having a baby, then putting out a country album under the name The Wreckers. Although the Wreckers song "Leave the Pieces" was Grammy-nominated (noticing a theme here?) and Branch's new country duo was touring with genre superstars Rascal Flatts, some of her fans were confused, wondering, Where's that cute girl we knew and loved from MTV?

Today, nearly 10 years after her music hit the landscape, Branch is the first one to admit that her career has been a wild ride. Now she ping-pongs back and forth between Nashville and Los Angeles with her husband, Teddy (the bass player in her touring band), and their 4-year-old daughter, Owen, and is anxiously awaiting the release of her next album, *Everything Comes and Goes*. It's been in limbo for, well, longer than she would like (more on that later).

A charming raconteur who doesn't take herself too seriously, Branch agrees to chronicle her various life chapters—and their corresponding tattoos—thus far. "I have 13 tattoos," she says proudly. "I call them stickers. It started off when I was younger, getting smaller random stickers all over my body."

Chapter One: Precocious Schoolgirl
Tattoo: Blue musical note on her left shoulder

Growing up in a middle-class family in Sedona, AZ ("a tourist town, very New Age hippy-dippy—a weird place to grow up"), Branch hated going to class because it interfered with her passion: playing music. She started taking voice lessons when she was 8. "I was always singing and writing melodies on my cheesy little keyboard," she says. "My parents didn't want to buy a piano because they didn't think I'd stick with it. It's obviously a much bigger purchase than a guitar. I kept begging for a piano, and when I realized that wouldn't happen I started begging for a guitar." She got her first guitar on her 14th birthday—a hand-me-down from her uncle. She was instantly obsessed. "I was locked in my room with it, and a chord book, and about a week later I came out in the living room and said, 'Mom, Dad, I have something to play for you.' When I finished they were like, 'Oh, cool, what song is that?' I'm like, 'I wrote it.' It was a very teenybopper love song called 'Fallen.' My favorite part about high school was writing songs about boys. And that was when they knew I needed that guitar."

In school, Branch was *that girl*—an outcast who dressed in baggy pants and Beastie Boys T-shirts and blew off math class to practice her songs. "I would come to school with my guitar and play in the hallways, and everyone knew, That's Michelle, she sings," she says. "I was so focused on music, there wasn't room for much else. I would ditch every class and either they would find me in the choir room or in the theater. I remember at one of my parents' first parent-teacher conferences, they showed up to my algebra class, and the teacher said, 'Um, she's flunking algebra because she hasn't been showing up for class,' and then the drama teacher came in and said, 'She's not technically in my class, but she's getting an A.'" Branch's determination to forge a music career alienated teachers and guidance counselors. "No one would give me any support outside my house, my parents. It was really frustrating."

Branch's rebellion didn't just come across in her music. Her father owned a building that was rented out by a tattoo parlor, and one day, when she was 15, she finally convinced him to let her get her first tattoo. "Looking back, I'm so surprised he let me do that," Branch says. "My dad knew that music was gonna be part of my life, because I've been singing since I could talk. I think he was fine with the music note. His thought was, If I let her get this out of her system, she'll be done. But as anyone with tattoos knows, that's just making it worse. Once you have one, there's no going back. I can't remember the name of the tattoo artist, but I remember she was so nervous because my dad was there as I was getting it. She wasn't excited to be doing it."

As she became more serious about her music (she also plays the cello, the piano, and the drums), Branch, who was then a sophomore, decided to drop out of school. "Finally, one night at dinner, my dad turned to my mom and said, 'You know, why does she have to go to school?' So I left."

Chapter Two: Record Deal
Tattoo: Asian character on her lower back, which has since been covered with "Owen Isabelle" (her daughter's name) and black roses

Branch's early gigs consisted of rocking out everywhere from Javelina Cantina, the Mexican restaurant her mom managed, to county fairs, PTA meetings, and Girl Scout events. Her set list included covers by Sheryl Crow, Lisa Loeb ("I stalked her in my younger years"), and Fleetwood Mac. She raked in the tips and, if it was a good crowd, she would sneak in original tracks she'd written. If the crowd seemed more interested in the TV above her head, she'd lure them back with a heartfelt rendition of Jewel's "You Were Meant for Me."

In 2000, she signed a deal with Madonna's now-defunct label Maverick Records, though Branch says the Material Girl didn't have a lot to do with her album. "She definitely was aware of what was going on, but she wasn't that involved. I've only met her a handful of times."

Chapter Three: Grammys
Tattoo: Star on her right ankle

"I would get a tattoo at different career milestones—having a record go gold or platinum, stuff like that," Branch says. "It was so surreal. Everything on my first record happened so fast, and no one knew what to expect. To be nominated for a Grammy completely caught me off guard because I was this teen artist, and it meant that all of my peers and people I looked up to were recognizing what I was doing. It was the most flattering thing. I never dreamed of being there—I never, ever thought I'd be nominated. I wasn't old enough to drink, so I got tattoos instead."

She was touring with Carlos Santana, enjoying the wild success of their song "The Game of Love," when the icon gave her some sage career advice: Don't do drugs and don't ride in helicopters. "He had lost his manager in a helicopter crash," Branch says. "I have no problem staying away from helicopters; they actually freak me out." But did she listen to his other words of wisdom? She pauses for a second, and then laughs: "A little bit."

Chapter Four: Pressure to Sex Up Her Image
Tattoos: "Left" and "Right" on her respective wrists

As her success grew, so did the label's desire for her to be more like the scantily clad performers her age. "It actually got worse as I gained more success," she says. "During my second record, we were going to shoot a video for my song 'Breathe.' The director sat me down and said, 'I think maybe we should *not* have you playing guitar in this one. Maybe we call in a choreographer.' I was like, 'No, no, no! The only time I dance is when I drink tequila.'"

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Branch also fought off the fashion advice ("They're like, 'Wear a rubber bustier, and we want you to have blue eye shadow'—I was dying") and instead clung to her integrity, getting a few more tattoos along the way. "I thought it would be funny," she says of the wrist tattoos. "A lot of people get stuff that's really meaningful, like names or dates. People see [my wrists] and go, 'That looks so pretty—what does it say?' And I tell them, and then they think I'm crazy."

The pressure to change wasn't easy for the singer. "It was really intimidating. Being younger, being female, you feel like you should be so grateful for every opportunity you get handed and you should say yes to everything. All of this was happening as I was going through that age where you're starting to be independent and getting a little bit angst-y, so maybe it worked to my benefit. I was wanting to revolt against everyone who was telling me what to do. I could see if someone had an angle or was trying to sneak something by me, and I would be like, 'Don't even try it.' Fortunately, after I said no a couple of times, they understood not to even ask."

Chapter Five: The Wreckers
Tattoo: A pinup on her forearm

After getting married, Branch still felt pressure from her label to do "poppy, commercial stuff." But she wasn't feeling very inspired. "I wanted to find a more organic singer-songwriter approach," she says. So Branch and Jessica Harp, one of her backup singers, began writing and jamming on the bus every night. "I started getting so excited about the material that I told the label, 'I want to make a country record.' I think they were like, 'Let's just let Branch do this, and then we can get her back for a solo record.' I had made my success on *TRL* as a teen artist, but I was growing up, and I don't think they knew how to grow with me." Branch and Harp recorded the Wreckers material and debuted it for the label. "The head of Maverick came down to listen to it, and he said, 'Wow, it sounds classic.' If anyone else told us that, it would be the biggest compliment ever, but we knew coming from him that it meant it sounded old and boring."

About a week after that, Branch found out she was pregnant. "I wasn't planning [the pregnancy] at all. I had this moment of, *Great, I made a record that no one supports or believes in, and now I'm pregnant. Fantastic.* The head guy at Maverick said, 'I don't want anyone in your band over the age of 21, and I want it really young and fun.' And I just lost it, and I said, 'You know what's really young and fun? I'm pregnant! I'm gonna have a baby! That's young and fun!'"

Chapter Six: First Solo Album in Seven Years
Tattoo: TBD

Considering that she's chalked up 10 years in the music industry, you would think putting out her next record—her first solo country project—would be easy. "I'm really frustrated because it's been the longest process of putting out a record that I've ever known," she sighs. "I finished this record almost two years ago, and I'm stuck in this weird label bullshit." (In short: A lot of people got fired when it was about to be released, and although she moved to the Warner Brothers Nashville label, there's no official release date.) "I know it's coming out this year because if it doesn't I will lose my shit," she says. "I'm in a weird spot. I'm anxious to get out on the road and play this music for people. I'm really proud of this record, and the most frustrating part is that I want people to hear it. I just want to move forward. It's the worst case of bad timing ever."

One thing she does know for sure? She's not finished getting tattoos. "I've been planning an upper back piece for, like, five years," she says, breaking into a grin. "It's a huge ship on my back that says 'Homeward Bound.' Because when you're on the road as much as we are, you're always homeward bound."



Rock & Republic white tank top. Previous page: Tory Burch emerald green dress. Page 58: Coco de Mer red bra.

Hair: Kali Hofinger for celestineagency.com
Makeup: Lori Jean Swanson
Stylist: Bory Tan

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THE LOST BOY

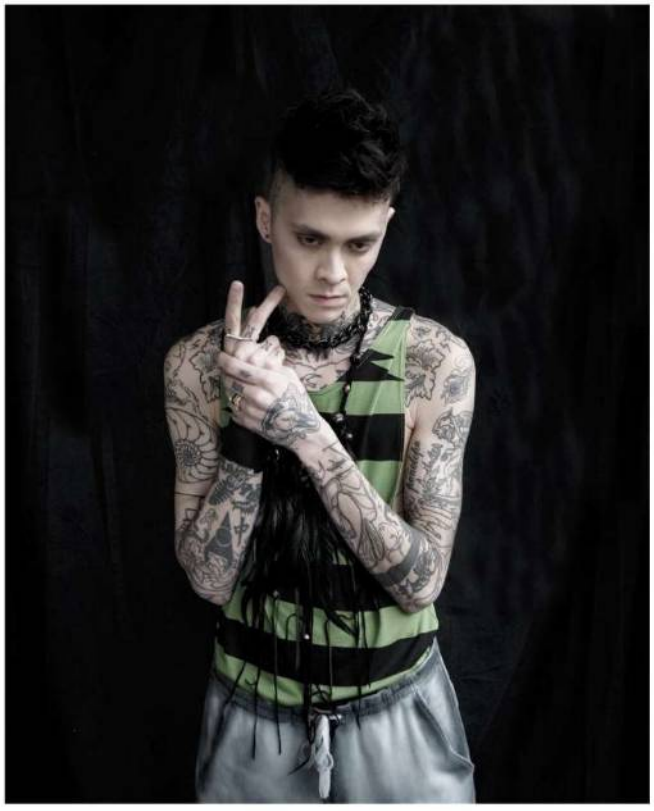
photos by
Jimmy Fontaine
styled by Karen Levitt

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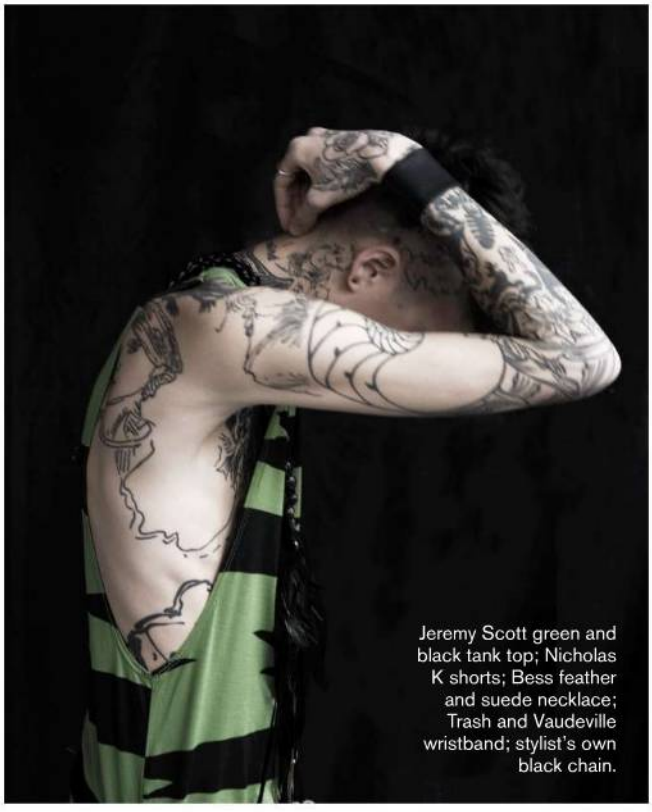
Telfar green hooded vest; Nicholas K black hooded windbreaker; Levi's jeans; Riviera Club T-shirt; Black Sheep and Prodigal Sons neck piece; Converse sneakers.

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Jeremy Scott green and black tank top; Nicholas K shorts; Bess feather and suede necklace; Trash and Vaudeville wristband; stylist's own black chain.

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Petrouman shirt;
Nicholas K cardigan;
April 77 jeans;
Converse sneakers;
Charles Albert ring.

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Raf Simons for Fred Perry top; Levi's jeans; Bess feather belt clip.

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Top and bottom right: Nice Collective jacket; Marc by Marc Jacobs jeans; Alternative Apparel T-shirt; Trovata cardigan; Dr. Martens boots; Alexis Bittar collar; stylist's own necklaces; Midas for jwlkpress.com pin. Bottom left: Raf Simons for Fred Perry top; Levi's jeans; Bess feather belt clip; Converse sneakers.



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Lost Art cape; Black Sheep and Prodigal Sons neck piece and horsehair necklace; Fingers Crossed jeans; Converse sneakers.

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Obesity & Speed
top; April 77 jeans;
Dr. Martens boots;
stylist's own necklace
and earrings.

Model: Sean Risley
Hair: Staci Child
Makeup: Christine Cherbonnier
Location: Root Brooklyn

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Q+A

SHOOTER JENNINGS

The son of country music's most famous outlaw discusses his apocalyptic new concept album inspired by equal parts shady politics, crumbling economy, and children's programming.

BY ERIC ALT PHOTOS BY TRAVIS SHINN

Fed up with the country music business and itching for a new start, Shooter Jennings decided to pack up and move from New York to California. Somewhere in the middle—that vague expanse of land his father, Waylon, famously proclaimed his love for in "Too Dumb for New York City, Too Ugly For L.A."—Shooter saw a world falling apart around him. "The economy crashed and all this stuff was going on, and I was driving right through the middle of it," he says. Describing the experience as "a perfect storm of emotions," he says the end result was *Black Ribbons*.

Described as "Pink Floyd meets Ministry," it's a concept album in which dark and foreboding tracks (courtesy of his newly rechristened band, Hierophant) are punctuated by the ranting of a late night DJ called Will O' the Wisp, voiced by Stephen King, a man who knows a thing or two about bleak futures.

So it's surprising to find Shooter suspiciously free of dark clouds when discussing the album, his life, and his rather unique upbringing. Engaged to actress Drea de Matteo and a proud papa to 2-year-old Alabama Gypsy Rose, he clearly isn't about to let his concerns about the future mess up his present. After all, he's got more pressing concerns—like where, exactly, he's going to put that "Alabama" tattoo.

INKED: How many tattoos do you have now?
SHOOTER JENNINGS: Six.

What prompted you to get your first one? I got it on the day of my 18th birthday. It's on my right arm and it's this crappy, nonsensical tattoo that looks like there's an "N" in the center of it. Which my friends always joke was for "Nazareth." *[Laughs.]* I have no reasoning behind it except that I turned 18 and was like, "I'm getting a tattoo."

Did you just select a design randomly off the wall? It was in one of the books. It was some silly, like, star-looking pattern kind of Superman-looking thing that has absolutely no meaning to it. I had the center of it filled in red later to try and make it look a little better, which didn't really help. Kick ass! *[Laughs.]*

How long ago was your last one? The last one I got was this bullet that I have on my right hand. I got it in Austin. Me and my fiancée, Drea, got matching tattoos with our initials. Mine has her initials and it's on my right hand. We were doing South by Southwest, so I think it had to have been 2004. That was my last one. My daughter's name is Alabama, and I'm getting an "Alabama" tattoo but I haven't figured out where I'm getting it. But I'm getting it somewhere.

How many tattoos does Drea have? She has several. She has seven, I think. She has some on her arm; she has her grandmother's name and the name of this lady, Ana, who lives with us and who, like, raised her. She has my bullet. She has stars on her fingers. She has an AC/DC tattoo on her stomach. She has a skull design on her back. So she's got a good number of them.

Do you feel like you need to step it up? Well, the arm piece I got was a birthday gift from her, and it was her idea. I always wanted to get something nice and big, and she had the idea of getting a gun. She introduced me to Chris O'Donnell at New York Adorned, and he designed this gun and put it on my arm. So now I have the biggest tattoo of both of us.

Have you ever seen anyone with a Shooter Jennings tribute tattoo? I've seen a lot of them for my dad. A lot of Waylon logos. And I've seen several that are mine—people have gotten my signature tattooed on them, people have gotten lyrics to songs, a logo from an album cover. It's quite an honor. One guy had a Waylon logo with the lyrics to one of my songs, "Some Rowdy Women," tattooed around it. That's devotion, man. *[Laughs.]* I don't know if I would have gotten, like, a Nine Inch Nails tattoo when I was 16. Maybe I would have. But it's always flattering when you see someone who's permanently put something that you did on their body.

No creepy ones? No one has you and them on a unicorn with a big heart around it? No. That'd be awesome, though.

As a kid, you basically grew up on a tour bus with your mom and dad. In retrospect, was that the greatest upbringing ever? Well, looking at in retrospect is different from when I was little. When you're little you don't know the difference, so I thought everybody's parents went on tour buses. It took me a while to figure that out, that I was different than most people in that way. But in retrospect I had a very different life and maybe I didn't get to do a lot of the things that normal kids got to do, but at the same time I had a really great life and I got to see so much and my parents were so cool.

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"I watch these awards shows and stuff, and what's supposed to be art these days is just littered with spoon-fed, programmed bullshit."

I loved it. I mean, I bring my daughter on the road with me. When she was really little we had her out for six, eight weeks at a time. She'd just sleep on the bus. It's part of it, you know? It's weird, though. Being a dad, I hate being away from her. Hopefully Daddy can make some money this year so we can get a bus of our own. *[Laughs.]* Because it's usually nine dudes and us on the bus. But she had them all wrapped around her finger.

Your new album, *Black Ribbons*, seems to be a pretty pessimistic view of where we're headed in this country. What stirred that up? I had been through an experience with my old label and sort of left Nashville with a bad taste in my mouth. It was fun and all, but we just could not get on the radio, could not get videos played, couldn't get anything. So I left that experience of five years with this kind of sour feeling, and I kind of felt like I had been constricted to a degree. So I really set out to, for lack of a better word, make kind of a "revenge" album. It then quickly turned into something different. The world fell apart. The economy crashed and I found myself driving through the middle of it.

How did you get Stephen King to voice the Will O' the Wisp character? I had always wanted to execute this DJ plan, which I'd had really early on. I was on the bus and I was watching a lot of *City Confidential* and there was this guy, Paul Winfield—he's dead now, but he narrated that show and he had this voice that was really kind of eerie. So I had the idea to put this DJ on there and at the end of the record reached out to Stephen King, which turned out really good. *[Laughs.]* I'm indebted to him for the rest of my life. Here's this punk calling him saying, "Hey, wanna be on my record?" But he did, and he liked it. So the meaning of the record kind of took this turn, and it became more about trying to create an audio movie experience that goes along with the sound and the vibe of the record—the fear of what *could be* going on behind closed doors and what *is* going on behind closed doors, as far as the government.

Listening to the DJ's rants, it's hard not to be reminded of Bill Hicks. Oh, yeah, man. I think he's great. I loved his stuff about drugs. But, yeah, that kind of a thing, it comes back to how the Will O' the Wisp character came about. When I was speaking to Stephen I was trying to describe the character a little bit, and he was talking about when he was younger there were these beatnik DJs who'd play some music and kind of talk politics and read poetry and do all this kind of stuff. It really was what the character was. And someone like Bill Hicks, it was social commentary more than it was comedy. And that's kind of what was going on with this guy too. We're in such a touchy time when it comes to censorship and political correctness and the environment and all this touchy shit that they've got shoveled right in our faces. At some point, you've got to just be like, "Man, this is just bullshit. Fuck you guys and your rules, we're doing the best we can."

Do you have any optimism left? I feel like the record is optimistic in the sense that the message is that the truth is what is important and it's the only thing that prevails. Truth and love. You have to paint the bad to get the good out of it. I think the key element for me and my daughter—and this is where everything kind of comes together—is that growing up in this world she's got to know you can't trust anything that you're told, and you've got to feel it for yourself and know what the truth is. It's like *Pinocchio*, man. I watch all these movies all the time now, I'm engulfed in this world of children's media, which I absolutely love. *[Laughs.]* It's probably been one of the most inspiring periods of my life. *[Laughs.]* But she watches *Pinocchio* all the time and I'm looking at that and the way that they paint that story, it's like he had to learn how to tell the truth and learn how to be good because everything else around you is set up to make you fail. And it's about finding your own peace and keeping it.

Does the song "Fuck You (I'm Famous)" mean you and Drea aren't going to be doing a reality show? *[Laughs.]* You know what? We definitely *won't* have a reality show—they've come knocking, though.

Really? Yeah. People will see us out at a restaurant or something with our kid and our 75-year-old Nicaraguan nanny who lives with us, and people will be like, "We think they'd be great for TV." It's like, "Man, give me a break." Look at these people on these shows—you're ruining their lives, putting their children on TV and shit like that. People want to be famous so bad. It's the whole fame culture thing. The one thing that's good about the economy going down the shitter is that people are not going to want to fucking hear about how much money these people are spending. It's absolutely horrible. But I watch these award shows and stuff, and what's supposed to be art these days is just littered with spoon-fed, programmed bullshit.

Does it bother you that the face of country music is someone like Taylor Swift? It's always been that way. It's always been this kind of tight-knit operation, country music. There have been situations like with my dad where it got so big on its own and it created such a stir on its own that they found they couldn't control it. You can only expect to be fed what they want you to hear or see or read, unless it's done by someone who is smart enough or is just their own person enough to do something different that the world takes notice of. With country music, it's processed, it's bubblegum, it's completely a pop thing now. It's the same thing in rock 'n' roll. My friends and I were just talking about this. Every band that you hear in rock 'n' roll sounds like another band at a very specific era of their careers. People will be like, "Oh, yeah, that band's awesome, they sound like early Bowie."

But at least Taylor Swift is writing her stuff, and she's really young so I don't want to be like, "Screw this girl." Unless she's shit-talking the old guys. That's another problem—this sense of entitlement. These days, everyone is so entitled and they don't know shit. They only know what's out there now. They know that Miley Cyrus is big, they know that Taylor Swift is big. And that's all they feel they need to know. That's a sad situation.

As a kid, were you ever pissed that they never showed your dad's face on *The Dukes of Hazzard*? *[Laughs.]* It's funny, because they weren't really his hands either. It was a double's hands on there. In the version [of the theme song] he put out as a single, he makes a joke about that: "I'm a good ol' boy/I know my momma love me/But she don't understand/They keep showing my hands and not my face on TV." I always got a kick out of that. He just didn't give a fuck. They'd send him the scripts and he'd be out on tour and he'd just stop at recording studios. I still run into people who are like, "Hey, your dad shot in and out of my studio in 1982 doing three episodes' worth of voice-overs." I've got tapes where he's messing up and making jokes and all this shit.

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INKED GIRL

NATALIE JEAN

Ballet is brutal. Just ask Natalie Jean. This Jane of all trades has been dancing since she was young, starting with ballet and graduating into modern dance, tap, and now break dancing. Under the tutelage of noted choreographer Monica Ryan, she learned early on how to express her creative spirit, and as an adult she has channeled that into other performing arts, namely modeling, acting, and, most recently, stunt work. "I love the adrenaline," she says about her new daredevil job. "I think it's because of ballet. Being a dancer is really hard. You beat the shit out of yourself on a regular basis."

Not long ago, she was discovered by stunt coordinator Douglas Crosby (*The Wrestler*, *American Gangster*), and though she's doing things that she describes as "on the lower level of cool," she's working her way up to doing scenes in which she'll leap off a building or be thrown under a bus. The ink she has is just more proof that this beauty is tough. Her first piece—a large pair of pointe shoes on her biceps—was done by Shakey, formerly of Jester's Court Tattoos, where she was a shop assistant. On her hips are two daggers—one piercing a human heart, the other piercing a rose—and the piece on her left side was completed in one marathon six-hour sitting.

But she's also got a softer, nostalgic side, as reflected in the Pittsburgh tribute tattoos she shares with friends. "Some of my tattoos are really silly. I like them to be nicely done, but it's all about your life. It's a little map, a little story of everything you've gone through." These days, she's happy helping out her Pennsylvania buddy Bam Margera with some scenes for the upcoming *Jackass 3D* and getting to work on Crosby's directorial debut. Maybe that will feature some awesome under-the-bus stunt action. —*Rebecca Swanner*

PHOTOS BY JAIME DEMARCO



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H&M top; Massa Culture underwear; Created by Fortune bracelet; Dolce Vita shoes. Left: Massa Culture sleeve; H&M underwear. Previous page: Massa Culture top and underwear; Created by Fortune bracelet; Dolce Vita shoes.

Hair: Nicole Obert
Makeup: Brian Feiss
Stylist: Jessi Butterfield
Location: Root Brooklyn

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INKED SCENE

"Tattoos don't need a great, grand story. I want to go the opposite: I don't want any of my tattoos to mean anything. I want people to see them as walking art, which is different than trying to convey many messages on your body."
–Vyvyn Lazonga

photo by KOSHTRA TOLLE

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MADAME VYVYN LAZONGA

The pioneering female tattoo artist talks Sailor Jerry, staying inspired, and being banned from IHOP.

MADAME LAZONGA'S TATTOO
1529 Western Ave., Seattle, WA, 206-622-1535, vyvyn.com

INKED: You started your tattoo apprenticeship in the '70s with C.J. Danny Danzl. What was it like learning to work under the old salt?
VYVYN LAZONGA: It was hard for me to deal with him at times, but I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to learn how to tattoo under Danny's wing. The first two years, it was just us in his shop, me being his helper-outer. We were quite the unusual pair.

By helping him in the shop, did you become interested in taking up the tattoo machine yourself? I had decided I wanted to learn to tattoo before I met Danny. It was an era, a totally different era, where tattooing was untapped and undiscovered. I always wanted to approach it more as an art form than a business. When I started helping Danny, I would do my own drawings, using watercolors in my flash, which Danny put up in the shop. I started doing things that were a bit different and nontraditional so people could have more variety, especially at a time when more women started getting tattooed.

Were you tattooed before working with Danny? Yes. Before Danny opened his shop there weren't any in town—the original skid row in Seattle. So I had gone over to Bremerton, which was a naval station, but they didn't have a tattoo shop there either. The closest tattoo shop I could find was in Tacoma, and that's where I got my first tattoo. It was run by this cute couple, Professor Rex and his wife, Brenda. They were adorable. It was a clean, neat-as-a-pin shop. Very professional.

What was that first tattoo? Oh God. Well, at that time you didn't have choices, and I didn't want to get something tattooed on my butt in front of the window. I decided not to go for a rose because that's boring and everyone had them. I wanted something more esoteric, so I got a bat with skull wings on my arm. *[Laughs.]* Really, I couldn't be the farthest thing from that. After I wore it around, these ruffians, hoodlums, would try to pick fights with me because they thought I was tough. That was the beginning of me being tattooed.

Later in the '70s, you acquired fine-art tattoos, including full sleeves by Ed Hardy and hand tattoos by Juli Moon. How did people react to that? It was a different time. When I used to work at Danny's shop, I would ride my bicycle back and forth from home to work, and I would give people a thrill. But in general I would cover up. Every once in a while, though, I would dress up and show them off, like when I was with my punk friends in the early '80s. I remember this one time we went to the International House of Pancakes, and they wouldn't let us in.

You were banned from IHOP? Yes. It was so awful. And then in the '90s, I once was at an Italian restaurant in New York with my boyfriend at the

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"In the beginning, Sailor Jerry influenced me most. ... He was the first person to bring that Japanese style to the West. He had his own style he developed from that, and he did it with such flair and great colors."







time, and as we were sitting at the bar having a drink, the owner came up to us and asked if we could put our coats on, so we just left. That was around 1997 or '98.

What do you think about the growing popularity and acceptance of tattooing today? It's so overcommercialized. It reminds me of tattooing in the '70s on skid row in Seattle, with its arcades, hoochie-coochie bars, pawnshops, and all the people would come down from the suburbs to get their thrills because it was "edgy." It really wasn't. We used to get these guys storming up and down First Avenue, pseudo-biker guys without any bikes. We used to call them "sidewalk commandos." Back then, everyone wanted to be a biker or rock star. Today, they want to be a tattoo artist.

Back then, when you became a tattoo artist, there weren't many women in the business. What was that like? It wasn't until about 10 years after I started tattooing that I found out there were other women tattooing. Maybe not as long as me, but we didn't have the Internet back then, so it was a whole different ball game in terms of people being able to network and get a hold of each other. As for being a woman tattooer, at that time I didn't have anything to compare it with. It was its own sort of category.

How long did you tattoo at Danny's shop? About seven years.

What made you decide to go on your own? Danny started talking to other tattooers about business. He had been giving me a good percentage, but then decided, after talking to the others, that he wanted to give me a pay cut. I didn't think it was right after I had been working there from the beginning. That's why I left him. I figured I'd go out on my own, but it's never easy on your own.

Was your first studio a street shop? It was a street shop, but I mostly did custom work and that has followed me through the decades. Now in my career, I see the value of having a balance, doing some commercial and some custom tattoos. It makes more sense to run a business like that unless you're thinking of doing a private studio where you just do custom work.

Danny taught you the mechanics of tattooing, but who have been your greatest artistic influences? In the beginning, Sailor Jerry influenced me most. He and Danny used to write letters to each other, and Jerry would send photos of his work. That was the first beautiful, well-planned-out Japanese-styled tattooing I had ever seen. Sailor Jerry today is a household word in tattooing, but most people don't even know what he stood for. He was the first person to bring that Japanese style to the West. He had his own style he developed from that, and he did it with such flair and great colors.

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"I decided not to go for a rose because that's boring and everyone had them. I wanted something more esoteric, so I got a bat with skull wings on my arm. *[Laughs.]* Really, I couldn't be the farthest thing from that."







Later on, I saw [tattoo] photos people brought over from Japan and thought they were the best things ever. At that time, there weren't any books really accessible, not until quite a few years later. The first book I got on Japanese tattooing was in the mid-'70s. It was all in Japanese but it was my treasure. Over in Japan, Horiyoshi II was my favorite because he was so prolific. I got to meet him a couple of times at conventions when I was in San Francisco, and that was thrilling. Then, of course, Ed Hardy and Cliff Raven were also great inspirations for me.

How would you describe your own tattoo style? Most of my work is nonliteral, organic. I'm intrigued by the idea of changing the skin so it looks more like fabric or wallpaper—a fusion of different things but more decorative than symbolic. Often people come in with so many different symbols and things that are meaningful to them but ruin the whole artistry of what they are trying to convey. So more often than not, I have to tell them not to include as many symbols, to keep it simple and bold. Tattoos don't need a great, grand story. I want to go the opposite: I don't want any of my tattoos to mean anything. I want people to see them as walking art, which is different than trying to convey many messages on your body.

How do you keep coming up with tattoo design ideas and keep it fresh over such a long career? Inspiration is always there, but it's hard staying fresh when you have all these details of running a business to take care of. I just keep doing my affirmations: "I'm working smarter, not harder" and "I'm surrounded by happy, healthy people every day." My whole apartment is filled with affirmations that cover the walls so I don't forget and don't go into the negative.

I recently lost the crew at my shop, so I have to start over a bit. But it's good because you learn from it. I learned I needed to find the right people and the right structure. I have two tattooers working with me now, and we let people who come into the studio know that we care about them; customer service is just as important as creativity.

In general, what's your interaction like with clients? Are you chatty or more quiet? I'm quiet when I work. Sometimes I wish I had that gift of gab to make small talk and jokes, but I hunker down and do what I do. I've always been into really weird things that I don't talk about to many people: esoterica and things that deal with the occult—although not so much anymore. When I was younger, I used to do a lot of stuff that dealt with the occult. I'm open-minded. I like to follow writers and stories of things that are pretty out there, like other galaxies and parallel universes, UFOs, and abductions. I find it fascinating.

We're at a time on this planet where everything is coming to a tumultuous crescendo. Sometimes when I go out to run errands and stuff, I have to keep myself so centered—otherwise I feel like anything can happen at any time. I don't want to be in the midst of some accident or tragedy. I try to be as aware as I can be. You only have so much time on this planet.

How long do you think you'll be tattooing for? No idea. I don't have a 401(k), so probably 'til I die. Who knows? —*Marisa Kakoulas*

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From left: Susan Behney-Doyle, Eric Doyle, Tad Peyton, Tim Corun, Dave Waugh, Matthew Wojciechowski, John Mutchler.

JINX PROOF TATTOO

3285 M St., NW
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It must be intimidating owning a tattoo parlor two miles away from the White House. How about operating only two blocks from the house where they filmed *The Exorcist*? Forget that: Imagine opening a tattoo shop in a city that hadn't had one in 13 years and then throwing open the doors on Friday the 13th. Jinx Proof Tattoo did all of those things—and just finished their 13th year in business. The name of the shop has certainly rung true. Go figure.

When owners Tim Corun and Karl Hedgepath, who had known each other from back East, met up while they were both building their craft in California, they decided that it was time to open up a shop back home. "We didn't really have anywhere to go, and we knew that there were no shops in Washington, D.C.," explains Corun. "It was the obvious choice to open a shop where there weren't any." Hedgepath, who is originally from Delaware, began piercing in 1993 and later took up tattooing; Corun calls Maryland home. The two opened Jinx Proof in Georgetown in 1996—there hadn't been a tattoo shop in the area since 1983.

Despite the odds and bad omens, Jinx Proof flourished. Although it wasn't always an easy road in Capitol Hill, they've grown in popularity and reputation over the years. It's obvious that being around so many vessels of commerce and interaction helps bring in clientele, but the shop didn't form an immediate friendship with its neighbors. "There's some that definitely would prefer that we weren't here. When we first opened we signed a three-year lease, and when a bank bought the whole block that we were on, there was a large upscale furniture store that wouldn't sign their lease if our lease was extended in any way," Corun reminisces. "That furniture store is no longer here."

photos by DAVID PETERSON

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Clockwise from top left: tattoo by Dave Waugh; shop interior; tattoo by Tim Corun; tattoo by Eric Doyle; tattoo by Susan Behney-Doyle; tattoo by Matthew Wojciechowski.

Now, along with the two owners, there are five other tattooers, including Eric Doyle, Tony Morrell, Matthew Wojciechowski, Susan Behney-Doyle, and Dave Waugh. There's also one piercer, John Mutchler, and two shop managers, TJ Mohler and Tad Peyton.

"I like the people that work at the shop and the people that get work here. It's in a nice area, and the owners take care of the shop and work along with the rest of us," says Jinx Proof artist Eric Doyle. "There have also been some great guest artists over the years, including Richard Stell. It's a comfortable environment where I get to work with people who inspire me to work harder."

With seven different artists, there is an array of different tattooing styles. "Although there is a lot of overlap of interest and subject matter, each person definitely has a distinct style and way of approaching their craft," Doyle says. "I just try to give the customer what they want for the most part. I like the look of straightforward, bold, classic tattooing and do my best to bring those sensibilities to whatever I am asked to do. By that I mean tattoos that aren't overly rendered, and are free of any extra crap that doesn't really need to be in there. At least, that's what I hope to achieve with a project."

The D.C. area provides a great cross section of clients from different walks of life. "You get a lot of variety in your workload, and get to meet lots of interesting people," says Doyle. "I have always been lucky enough to meet great folks through tattooing, but never as frequently as here. I think the location has everything to do with that."

The shop is in the center of Georgetown, providing access to university students, soldiers from multiple military bases, and sidewalk traffic from the many boutiques and restaurants. "We definitely have a lot to pull from," Corun agrees.

On top of that, Travis Barker, the cats from Good Charlotte, comedian Bob Marley from *The Boondock Saints*, and multiple Washington Redskins players have gotten work done at the shop. But what about the people at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue? "We have a fair amount of clients that work tangentially in the political world. For example, staff for members of Congress, Secret Service, etc. I had a client once who worked on Air Force One," Doyle says. As for portraits of our commander-in-chief: "I was in Germany during the last two elections—I voted early—so I wasn't around when the ensuing Obama tattoos happened. I do know that at least a half dozen were done." —*David Diehl*

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NORM

FROM: Spotlight Tattoo and Will Rise Studios in Los Angeles
VISIT: normwillrise.com

CHECK OUT
I am working at Spotlight Tattoo, but I recently opened my own place, called Will Rise Studios. I'll be working at both. I hope the new shop will bring people from around the world to sit in for a guest spot. There will always be room for guests, so hit us up. We're also opening up Known Gallery, which is a super sick gallery to cater to the newest and baddest artists out today.

RECENT FAVORITES
I've been doing a lot of black and gray tattoos. More gangster shit. Skulls, spiderwebs, script. Los Angeles people get cool tattoos. And working with Baby Ray [at Spotlight Tattoo] has given me some extra special knowledge about black and gray tattoos—as well as countless amazing, unbelievable stories! I just feel like all the people I'm around right now are really helping to shape me up. I'm really blessed. I do have a few sleeves going right now that I really like with eagles, snakes, roses, and other stuff. But my favorite thing to do is lettering. I'll do it all day.

WORDS OF WISDOM
Have fun, do your best, work as hard as you can. Ambition is not a negative trait. Keep focused and enjoy your friends and family.

photo by BRADLEY MEINZ

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NAME: Ginger

SHOP ASSISTANT AT: 13 Roses Tattoo, Atlanta, GA

My Suicide Girls shoot was done at the shop years before, while I was living in L.A. I moved back and figured since they've already seen me naked, why not give it a try? Not to mention that Joe Pettis is the coolest boss I've ever had!

People have been caught on camera having sex in the shop, ghost hunters have found ghosts here, we've had rooftop parties with BB guns—those are just some of the crazy stories. I think anything more specific would be grounds to have me killed!

The atmosphere at the shop? One word: sexy.

Know a stellar shop assistant who keeps the autoclave humming and the tattoo stations organized? E-mail us at shopgirl@inkedmag.com.

photo by GREG MANIS

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INKED 2ND ANNIVERSARY PARTY

We're two years old! For our second anniversary, the INKED crew and a few hundred of our closest friends packed into Avenue nightclub in NYC for a celebratory bash. Jack Daniel's provided the drinks and DJ Todd Free spun tunes. Next year we want cake! **For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.**















photos by ANTWAN DUNCAN

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BALTIMORE TATTOO ARTS CONVENTION

Not even a blizzard could stop the Baltimore Tattoo Arts Convention. This year's event was held at the Sheraton Baltimore City Center Hotel and featured more than 250 vendors. Over 7,000 attendees arrived to see burlesque performers, bands, and an after-party sponsored by INKED. **For more photos, go to inkedmag.com.**













photos by JOSH SISK

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BENEFIT SHOW FOR MATTY NO TIMES

When Matty No Times, tattoo artist at Three Kings Tattoo in Brooklyn, needed funds for a liver transplant, the NYC tattoo scene responded. The Three Kings crew threw a packed benefit bash at Union Pool featuring music by Gospel, Drunk Driver, and Tournament, where a special "Save No Times" T-shirt was sold. All proceeds went directly to his medical bills. To purchase the benefit T-shirt, visit threekingstattoo.com. Get well, man!



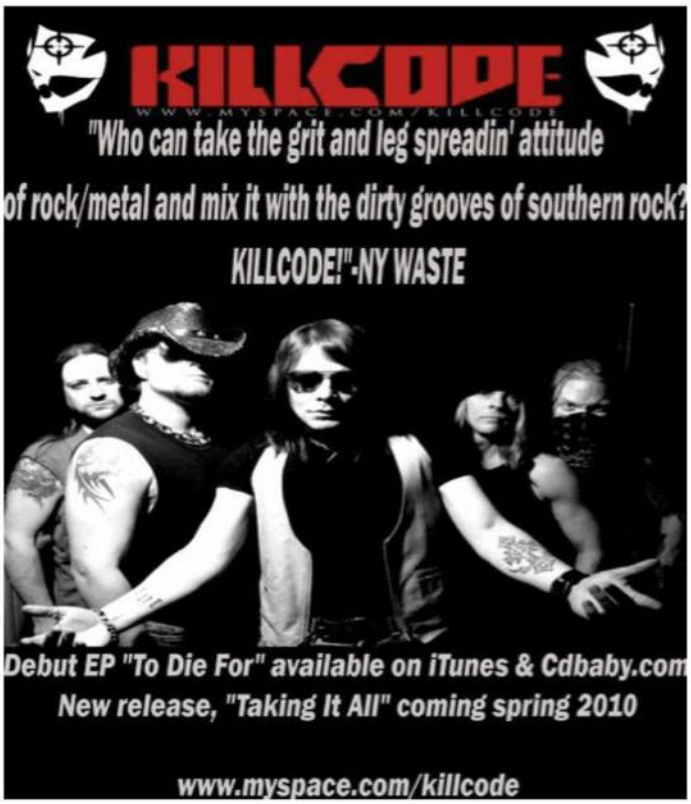


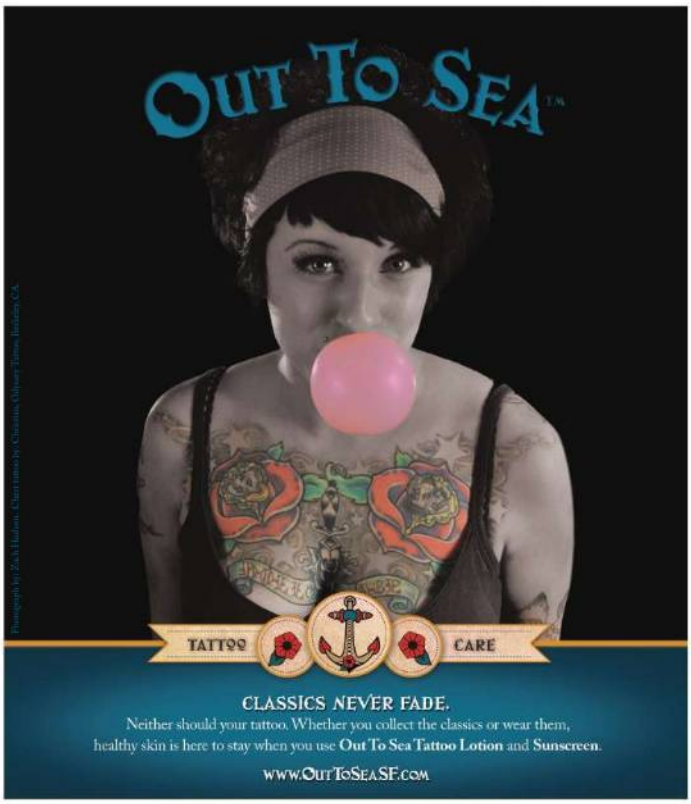






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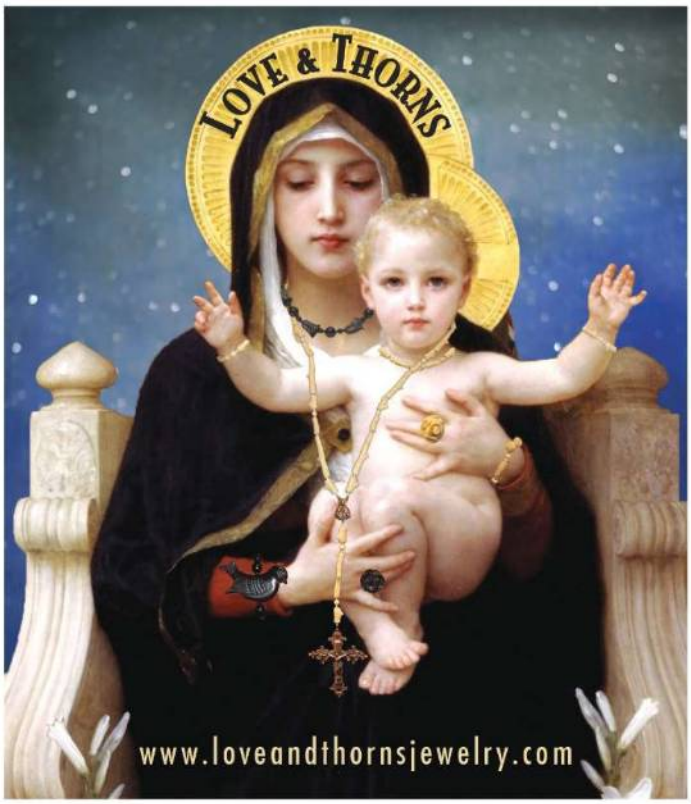
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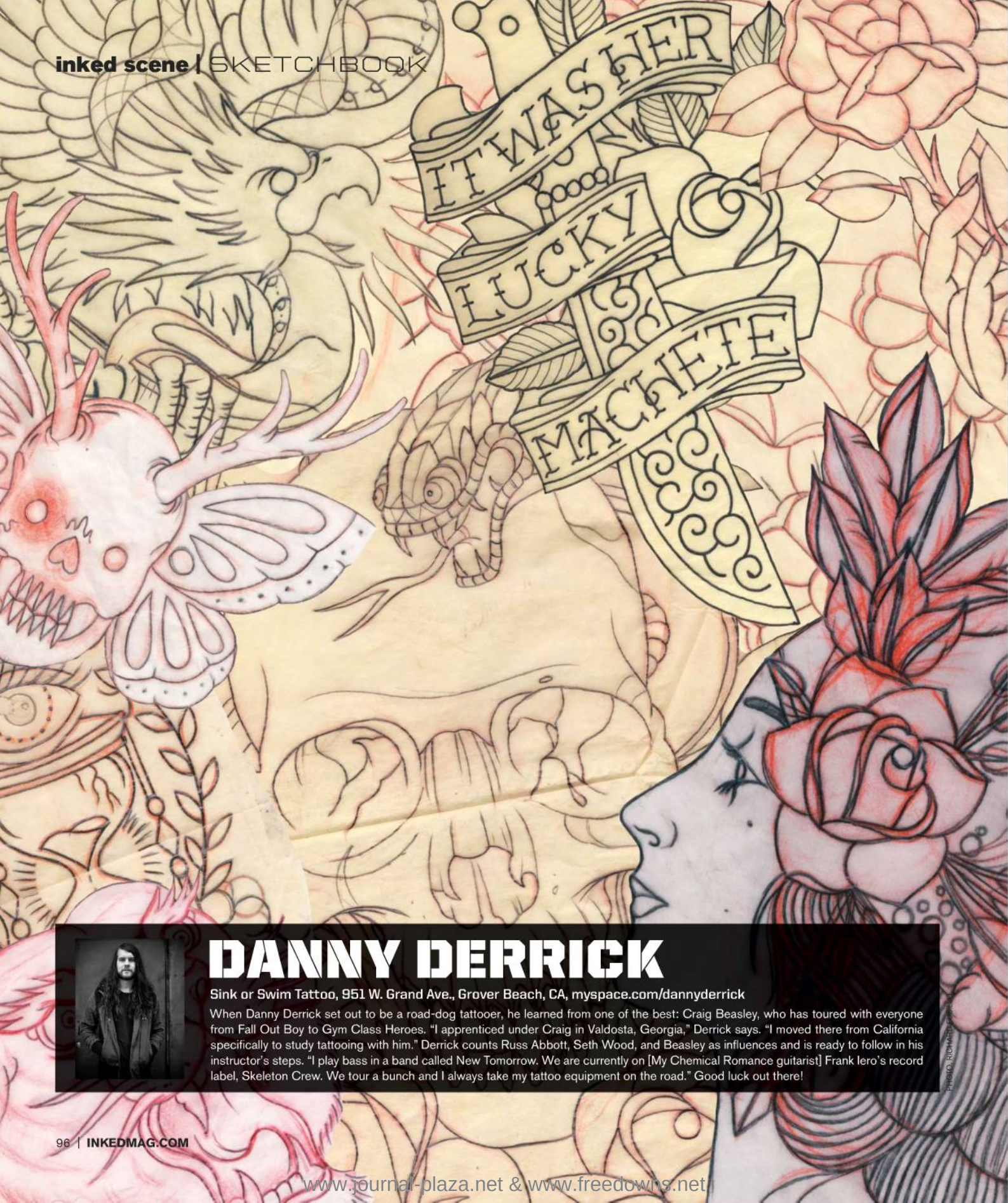


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DANNY DERRICK

Sink or Swim Tattoo, 951 W. Grand Ave., Grover Beach, CA, myspace.com/dannyderrick

When Danny Derrick set out to be a road-dog tattooer, he learned from one of the best: Craig Beasley, who has toured with everyone from Fall Out Boy to Gym Class Heroes. "I apprenticed under Craig in Valdosta, Georgia," Derrick says. "I moved there from California specifically to study tattooing with him." Derrick counts Russ Abbott, Seth Wood, and Beasley as influences and is ready to follow in his instructor's steps. "I play bass in a band called New Tomorrow. We are currently on [My Chemical Romance guitarist] Frank Iero's record label, Skeleton Crew. We tour a bunch and I always take my tattoo equipment on the road." Good luck out there!

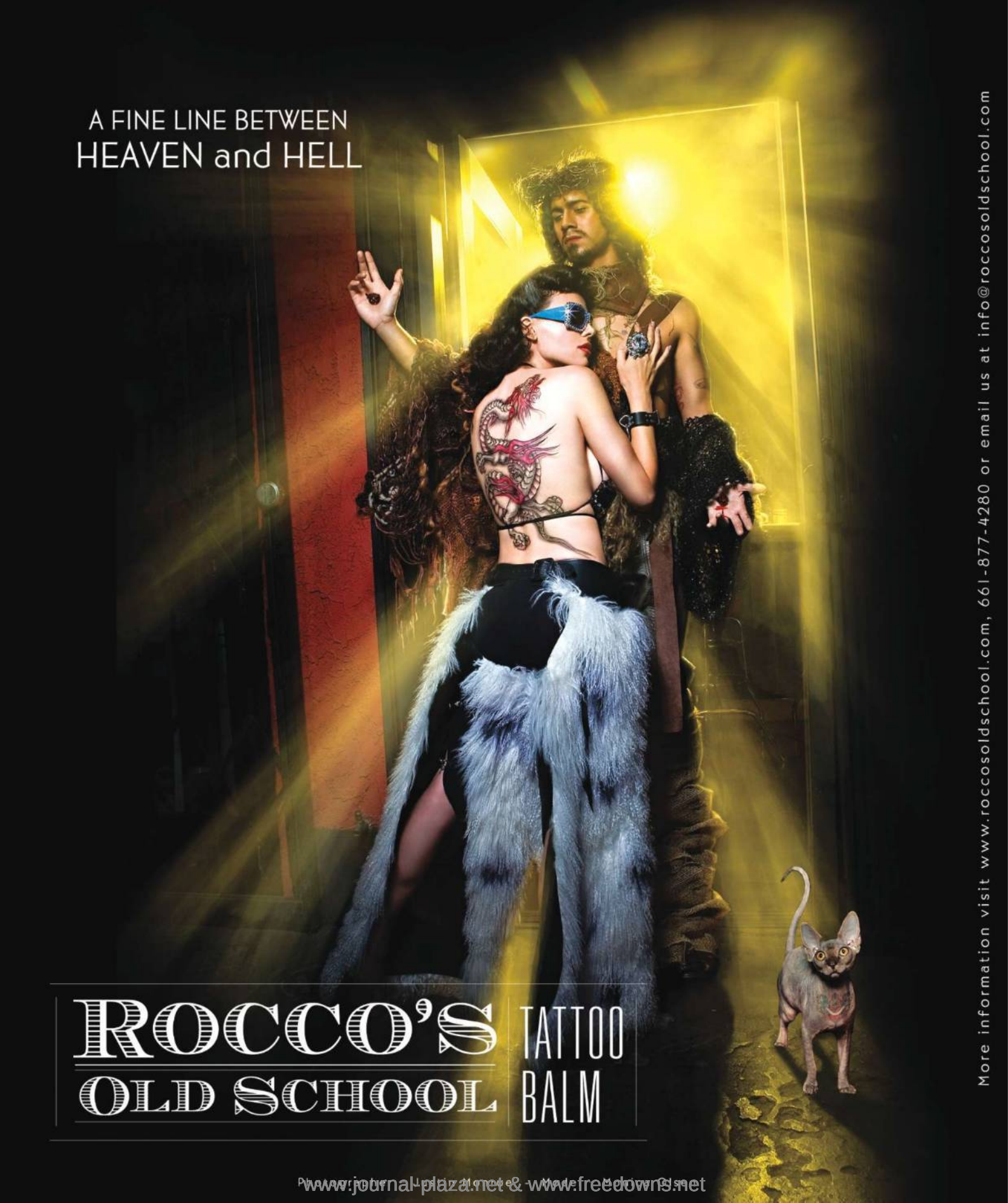
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